



PEEPS AT MANY LANDS

# ENGLAND

BY  
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ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR

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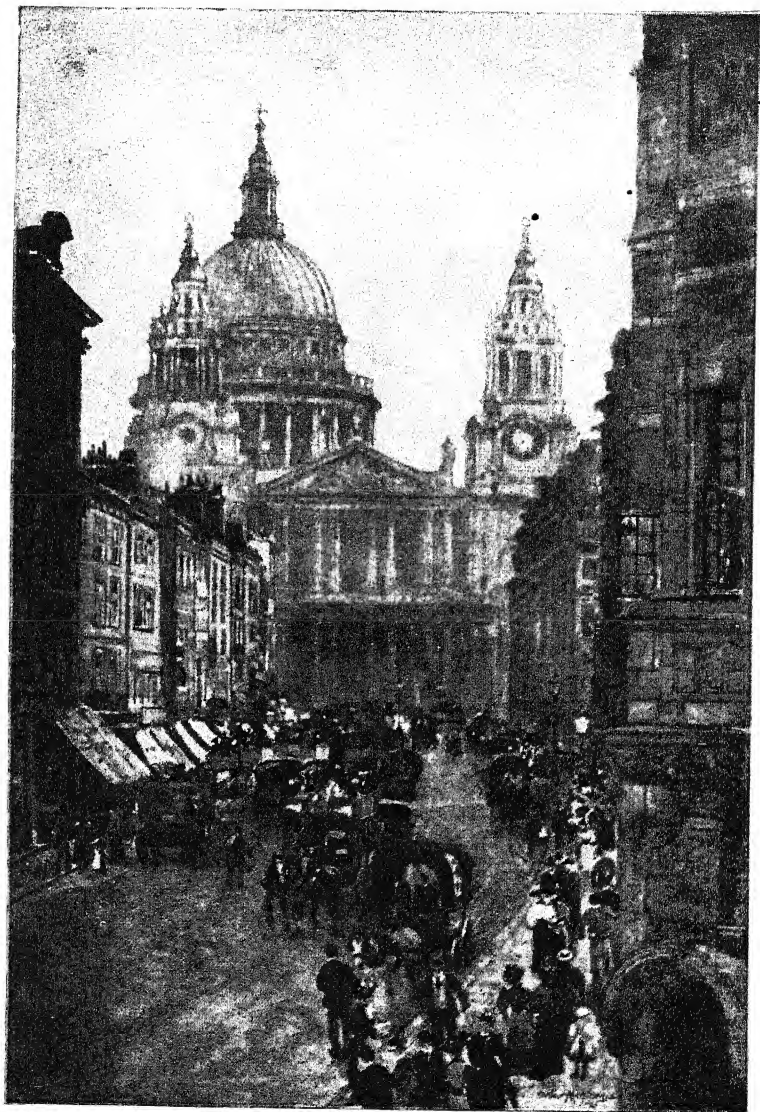


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LONDON; ST. PAUL'S AND LUDGATE HILL. *Pages 6 and 8.*



# ENGLAND

## IN LONDON TOWN—I.

LONDON is the greatest city in the world. How easy it is to say that or read it ! How very, very hard it is to get the least idea of what it means ! We may talk of millions of people, of thousands of streets, of hundreds of thousands of houses, but words will give us little grasp of what London means. And if we go to see for ourselves, we may travel up and down its highways and byways until we are dizzy with the rush of its hurrying crowds, its streams of close-packed vehicles, its rows upon rows of houses, shops, banks, churches, museums, halls, theatres, and begin to think that at last we have seen London. But alas for our fancy ! We find that all the time we have only been in one small corner of it, and the great city spreads far and wide around the district we have learned to know, just as a sea spreads around an islet on its broad surface.

When we read or hear of London, we are always coming across the terms West End and East End. West and East of what ? Where is the dividing-line ?

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The dividing-place is the City, the heart of London, the oldest part of the great town. Once the City was a compact little town inside a strong wall which kept out its enemies. It was full of narrow streets, where shops stood thickly together, and over the shops lived the City merchants in their tall houses. The narrow streets and the shops are still there, but the merchants have long since gone to live elsewhere, and the walls have been pulled down.

Now the City is nothing but a business quarter. It is packed with offices, warehouses, banks and public buildings, and it is the busiest part of London by day and the quietest by night. It is a wonderful sight to see the many, many thousands of people who work in the City pour in with the morning and stream out at evening. Every road, every bridge, leading to and from the City is packed with men and women, boys and girls, marching like a huge army, flowing and ebbing like the tides of the sea.

In the centre of the City there is a famous open space where seven streets meet. It is famous for the buildings which surround it, and the traffic which flows through it. All day long an endless stream of omnibuses, cabs, drays, vans, carts, motor-cars, motor-buses, carriages, and every kind of vehicle which runs on wheels, pours by. So great is the crush of traffic that underground passages have now been built for people to cross from side to side, and that is a very good thing, for only the very nimble could dodge their way through the mass of vehicles.

Upon one side of this space there stands a building

## In London Town

with blank walls, not very high nor very striking in appearance. But it is the Bank of England, where the money matters of half the world are dealt with! If we went inside we should find that the Bank is built around a courtyard, into which the windows look. Thus there is no chance for burglars to break in, and besides, the Bank is guarded very carefully, for its cellars are filled with great bars of gold, and its drawers are full of sovereigns and crisp bank-notes.

Upon the other side of the busy space stands the Mansion House, where the Lord Mayor of London lives during his year of office. Here are held gay feasts, and splendid processions often march up to the doors; for if a king or great prince visits London, he is always asked to visit the City, and he goes in state to a fine banquet.

A third great building is the Royal Exchange, adorned with its great pillars, and here the merchants meet, and business matters affecting every corner of the globe are dealt with.

But there are two places which we must glance at before we leave the City, whatever else we miss, and these are the Tower and St. Paul's Cathedral. And first of all we will go to the Tower, for it is the oldest and most famous of all the City's many buildings. Nay, the Tower is more than that: it is one of the famous buildings of the world.

For many hundreds of years the grey old Tower has raised its walls beside the Thames, and in its time it has played many parts. It has been a fortress, a palace, a treasure-house, and a prison. William the

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Conqueror began it, William Rufus went on with the work, and the latter finished the central keep, the famous White Tower, the heart of the citadel. For many centuries the Tower was the strongest place in the land, with its thick walls and its deep moat filled with water from the Thames, and the rulers of England took great care to keep it in their own hands.

To-day it is a show-place more than anything else, and everyone is free to visit it, to see the Crown jewels stored there, and to view the splendid collection of weapons and armour. But after all the place itself is the finest thing to see—to wander through the rooms where kings and queens have lived, to stand in the dungeons and prison-chambers where some of the best and noblest of our race have been shut up, and to climb the narrow winding stairs from floor to floor.

Many of the prisoners of the Tower were brought into it by the Traitor's Gate, a great gloomy archway under which the waters of the Thames once flowed. In those days the river was the great highway of London, and when the judges at Westminster had condemned a prisoner to be sent to the Tower, he was carried down the river in a barge and landed at the Traitor's Gate. Many and many a poor prisoner saw his last glimpse of the outer world from the gloomy gate. Before him lay nothing save a dreadful death at the hands of the headsman.

Outside the White Tower there is a garden, where once stood the block where the greatest of the prisoners were beheaded. Outside the Tower is Tower Hill, where those of a lesser rank suffered ; we may still see



## In London Town

in the Tower a headsman's block whereon heads have been laid and necks offered to the sharp, heavy axe. As for the names of those who have been executed in the Tower, history is full of them—Lady Jane Grey, Sir Thomas More, Anne Boleyn, Sir Walter Raleigh, Katherine Howard, the Earl of Essex, to name but a few who have suffered there. An earlier tragedy than any of these is the murder of the two little princes, Edward V. and his brother, put to death by command of Richard of Gloucester, Richard Crookback, their wicked uncle who wanted to seize the throne.

From the upper windows of the White Tower we can see the river crowded with ships and steamers and barges, and on a fine day it is a most beautiful sight. But the most striking thing in the view is the Tower Bridge. "This is a new bridge, and it has two great towers rising one on each side, as it seems, to the sky, and the bridge lies across low down between those towers. But when a big ship comes and wants to get up the river under the bridge, what is to be done? The bridge is not high enough! Well, what does happen is this—and I hope that every one of you will see it one day, for it is one of the grandest things in London: a man rings a bell, and the cabs, and carriages, and carts, and people who are on the bridge rush quickly across to the other side, and when the bridge is quite empty, then the man in the tower touches some machinery, and slowly the great bridge, which is like a road, remember, rises up into the air in two pieces, just as you might lift your hands while the elbows rested on your knees without moving, and the beautiful ship

## England

passes underneath, and the bridge goes back again quite gently to its place. This bridge has been called the Gate of London, and it is a good name, for it looks like a giant gate over the river."

### IN LONDON TOWN—II.

It is quite easy to find your way to St. Paul's Cathedral, for the splendid dome of the great church springs high above the highest roof of the City, and the gilt cross on its dome glitters in the sun 400 feet above the pavement below.

It is not a very old building, for it was raised after the Great Fire of 1666, the fire which laid the City in ruins and destroyed the old cathedral. It was built by a great architect, Sir Christopher Wren. He lies buried in the cathedral, and over his tomb is a Latin inscription which means, "If thou dost seek my monument, look around thee."

You see the meaning of this and look around, and acknowledge that the noble church is indeed a splendid testimony to the skill of him who built it. As you walk round the place, you find many other monuments to famous men. Nelson lies here and Wellington, our greatest sailor and our greatest soldier, and Dr. Johnson, the famous scholar. Here and there are battle-flags, the colours of famous regiments, decking the walls. Torn by shot and stained with blood, they speak of fierce battles where the men who bore them were in the thickest of the fight, but now

## In London Town

they hang in the silence of the great cathedral, mute witnesses of Britain's greatest victories.

The most striking part of the building is the great dome, which springs so high into the air that, viewed from beneath, its top looks far off, and dusky, and dim. You may climb it by a flight of many, many steps, and walk round it inside by means of a great gallery. This is called the Whispering Gallery, for if you stand at one side of it and whisper softly, the murmur runs round the walls and will reach someone standing on the opposite side, a long distance off.

Next, you may go on up and up until you reach the top of the dome and look out far and wide over London, with the river winding through the huge maze of streets and houses, and the whole spread out at your feet as a bird sees a place on the wing. It is a wonderful sight on a clear day, and on a dull one it is hardly less striking, for the huge forest of smoking chimneys spreads and spreads till it is lost on the horizon, and you think that there is no end to this immense town, and that it is stretching on and on for ever.

Well, now, from the City which way shall we strike, east or west? I think you would soon be tired of the East End, for there is little to see there that is pleasing or beautiful. Nearly all the people who live in the East End are poor, and they live in long rows of mean houses in dirty streets, where the air is close and everything is grimy. There are parts of the East End, of course, where things are better than this, with clean streets and nice houses, but still, there is nothing to

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attract a visitor like the splendid buildings and the beautiful parks to be seen at the West End of town.

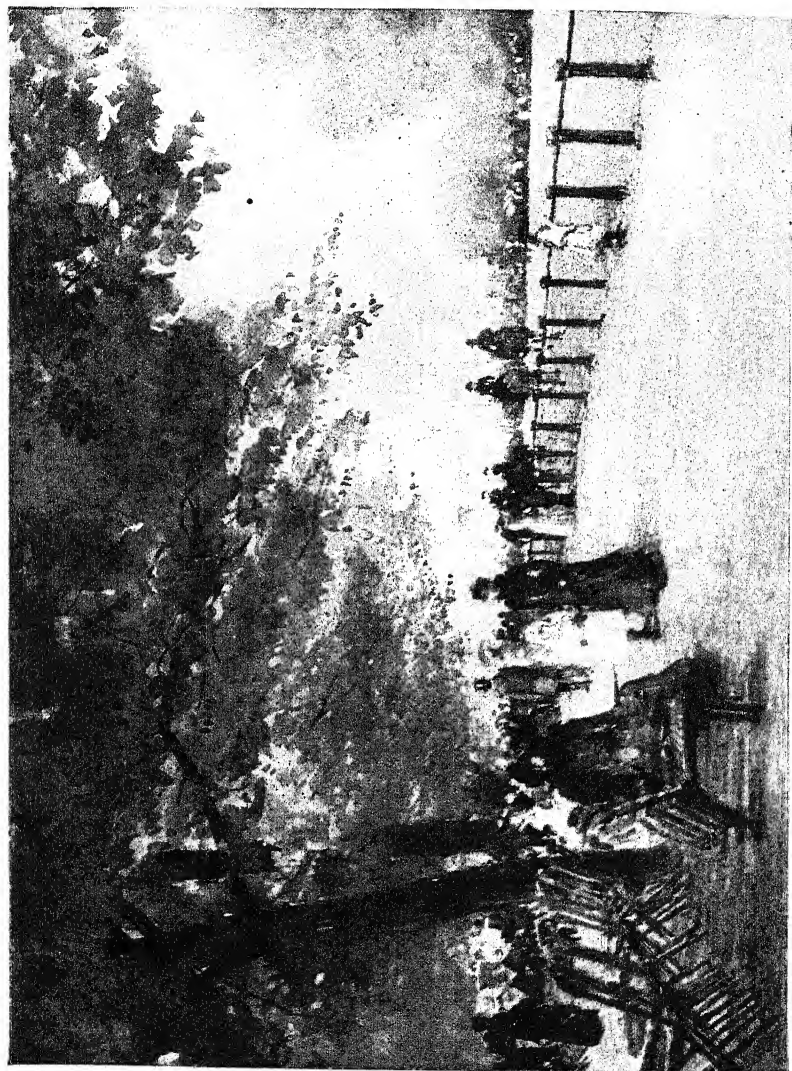
When we speak of parks that brings at once to the mind the thought of Hyde Park, finest of all London's fine open spaces, so we will go to it from St. Paul's by bus, and our way will be through some of the most famous streets of London. A seat on top of a London bus is a capital place from which to see the street scenes of the great city, and we climb up and, if we are lucky, get a front seat.

Away we roll down Ludgate Hill, across an open space, and up Fleet Street, where it seems that every newspaper in the world must have an office, so thickly are the walls covered by the names of all the well-known papers. Soon we see a monument erected in the roadway. It marks the site of Temple Bar, an old gateway which formed the City boundary to the west. Above the old gateway was a row of spikes, and on these the heads of rebels and traitors used to be displayed.

As soon as we pass Temple Bar we are in the Strand, that mighty London thoroughfare. Its name reminds us that it runs along the river bank, though to-day great buildings hide the river save for peeps down side-streets. At one time the south side of the Strand was lined with the mansions of great noblemen, whose gardens ran down to the water's edge, and the side-streets yet bear the names of the great houses which stood in the neighbourhood.

To our right as we leave Temple Bar rises the splendid pile of the new Law Courts, and on we go between close-





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packed lines of shops and theatres until we come out into Trafalgar Square, the central point of London. Here is a great open space where fountains quietly play and a lofty column rises, the latter crowned with a statue of our sailor hero, Nelson. At the upper end of the Square stands the National Art Gallery, where some of the finest pictures in the world may be seen ; but we must come another day to look at them, for our bus is still rolling westward.

We get a glimpse at Pall Mall, the region of club-land, and soon enter Piccadilly, one of London's most beautiful and famous streets. We pass the doors of the Royal Academy, and then a pleasant park opens to our left, the Green Park, while on our right runs a continuous line of mansions, shops, and clubs, until the bus pulls up at Hyde Park Corner, and we have reached the great park.

On a fine summer day Hyde Park offers one of the most wonderful scenes in London. A constant stream of splendid carriages, drawn by magnificent horses, pours into the park and moves round and round the Drive, and "The Row," with its riders, is even more interesting.

Rotten Row is a long, broad, tan-covered ride, where horsemen and horsewomen trot and canter to and fro. Finer horses and riders are not to be found. On a morning when the Row is fairly full, it is delightful to spend an hour or so, seated on one of the green chairs in shade of an elm or lime, watching the riders. Here comes an old gentleman on a stout cob. They pound steadily past, and now three or four young people

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mounted on tall, lively horses dash past at a gallop, chatting merrily as they go, and then there is a swift scurry of ponies, as some children dart along, racing each other up to the Corner, where all turn and come back.

Perhaps in an afternoon you may go in through the great gates at Hyde Park Corner and find the carriages drawn up in lines, and a feeling of excitement and expectation in the air. A clear track is being kept. For whom? For the Queen. She is coming up now from Buckingham Palace to drive in the Park. Suddenly there is a brilliant flash of colour as servants in royal liveries of glowing scarlet come into sight. Hats fly off as the royal carriage passes, drawn by splendid chestnuts, and there is the Queen, bowing and smiling at the people who greet her as she drives into the Park.

### IN LONDON TOWN—III.

Now that we have seen the Queen pass by, we will go and look at her home in London. Buckingham Palace is not far from Hyde Park Corner, and when we reach it we see a big, rather dull-looking building, with a courtyard before it, and red-coated soldiers marching up and down on guard. This palace of the King and Queen is, in truth, not very handsome outside, but it is very splendid within, its fine rooms being adorned with the paintings of great artists.

A noble road, called the Mall, leads from the front of Buckingham Palace, and if we follow it we shall come out on a wide, open space laid with gravel,



## In London Town

the Horse Guards' Parade. Or if we do not care about walking along the Mall, we can come through St. James's Park, with its pretty piece of ornamental water, where ducks and other water-birds fly about, and watch eagerly for crumbs flung to them by the visitors.

Crossing the Horse Guards' Parade, we go through a small archway into the great street called Whitehall. The archway is watched without by two Life Guards—tall men in shining steel breastplates and helmets, and mounted on tall horses—while others on foot march up and down within.

In Whitehall may be seen the room from which Charles I. stepped out to the scaffold on the day of his execution. It was once the banqueting-hall of a royal palace, and is now a museum, and anyone may go into it. The scaffold had been built outside the walls, and he stepped through a window to reach it, and there his head was struck off before a great crowd which had gathered in Whitehall.

The broad street is lined with tall buildings, where the business of Government is carried on ; and at its foot stand the Houses of Parliament, where laws are made for the nation. This noble range of buildings is crowned by three great towers, two square and one pointed. The pointed one is the Clock Tower, and there, high above our heads, is the great clock with its four faces. It is the largest clock in England ; its figures are 2 feet in length ; its minute-hand is 16 feet long, and weighs 2cwt. The hour is struck on a great bell called "Big Ben," and when Big Ben booms out over

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London it tells the people what o'clock it is, and they set their watches and clocks by it.

As we look round, we see at a short distance from us a majestic old church, its walls grey and time-worn. It is Westminster Abbey, the place where our kings and queens have been crowned for a thousand years, and where lie the remains of Britain's famous dead. No sooner do we enter the venerable building than we see on every side monuments and inscriptions to the memory of great men and women—kings, queens, princes, statesmen, famous writers, soldiers, sailors, travellers, all are there—some with a mere line or so of inscription, some with a huge sculptured monument. For many hundreds of years Westminster Abbey has been used as a burial-place, and to name those that lie there and to tell the story of their lives would be to narrate the history of England.

This noble church is built in the form of a Latin cross, and contains beautiful chapels opening from the main building, the finest of all being the Chapel of Henry VII. at the eastern end of the abbey. In these chapels lie many kings and queens of England, beginning with Edward the Confessor, who founded the abbey, and whose shrine stands in the interesting chapel behind the choir.

Near at hand is the famous Coronation Chair, an old wooden chair, with a large stone let in under its seat. The stone was brought to England by Edward I., who seized it at Scone in Scotland. It is the sacred stone on which all the Scottish kings had been crowned for many centuries, and when Edward placed it in the

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Coronation Chair he meant it to show that the English king was ruler of Scotland also. And yet it was a Scottish king who first joined the two kingdoms, and not an English one, for James VI. of Scotland became James I. of England, and the two kingdoms were united under the name of Great Britain. Our King, Edward VII., was, of course, the last to be crowned, seated in that famous old chair.

There is one corner of Westminster Abbey which all visit, no matter what other part they may miss, and that is the south transept, which everyone knows as Poets' Corner. Here have been buried some of the most famous writers of our land, and there are monuments to others who lie elsewhere.

From Westminster Abbey we will cross to Westminster Hall, and glance for an instant into the greatest room in Europe. This fine old hall was built by William Rufus, and consists of one huge apartment, and the span of its wooden roof is greater than any other room in Europe not supported by pillars. The hall was built for banquets and festivities, and coronation feasts were held in it for ages. At these feasts a champion, clad in full armour and mounted on a war-horse, would ride into the hall, and challenge anyone to dispute the king's title to the crown.

Westminster Hall was also used for law-courts, and continued to be so used until very recent times, when the courts were moved to the great building in the Strand.

Next we will look at Westminster Bridge, the largest and finest of all London bridges. Here we see the broad Thames rolling down to the sea, and have a

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splendid view of the river-front of the Houses of Parliament. On a summer afternoon the river-front looks very gay, for there is a long terrace beside the Thames, and the members come out to take tea there. They form parties with their friends, and the bright dresses of the ladies, and the movement to and fro, and the laughing groups at the little tables, form a very bright and cheerful scene.

Looking downstream from the bridge, we see on our left hand the Embankment, one of the biggest pieces of work that even London has ever done. Every day the river rises and falls with the tide, and sometimes when there has been much rain a great flood comes down from the country and makes it rise much higher still. Now, sometimes when the river rose very high it ran into houses and did a great deal of damage, so a great wall was built to keep Father Thames in his right place. "It was a wonderful piece of work. It is difficult to think of the number of cart-loads of solid earth and stone that had to be put down into the water to make a firm foundation, and when that was done the wall had to be built on the top, and made very strong. And after this was finished trees were planted. Thus there was made a splendid walk or drive for miles along the riverside."

### OLD FATHER THAMES—I.

FAMOUS above all English rivers is the Thames—"Old Father Thames," as the Londoners used to call it in days when its broad stream was their most familiar

## Old Father Thames

high-road. To-day the Londoner uses the motor-bus instead of a Thames wherry ; but still the great river rolls through the great city, and on its tide a vast stream of trade flows to and from the capital.

To write the story of the Thames would more than fill this little book, so that we can do no more than glance at a few of the famous places on this famous stream.

Springing in the Cotswolds, the infant Thames, first known as the Isis, runs thirty miles eastwards to gain the meadows around Oxford. Here the river spreads into a beautiful sheet of water at the foot of Christchurch Meadow, and glides gently past "the City of the Dreaming Spires."

In the summer term this stretch of the river presents a gay and busy scene. The rowing-men are out in racing boats, skiffs, canoes, punts, and almost every kind of boat that swims. Along the Christchurch bank are moored the college barges, great gaily-painted structures, whence the rowing-men put off, and where crowds of spectators gather on great race days.

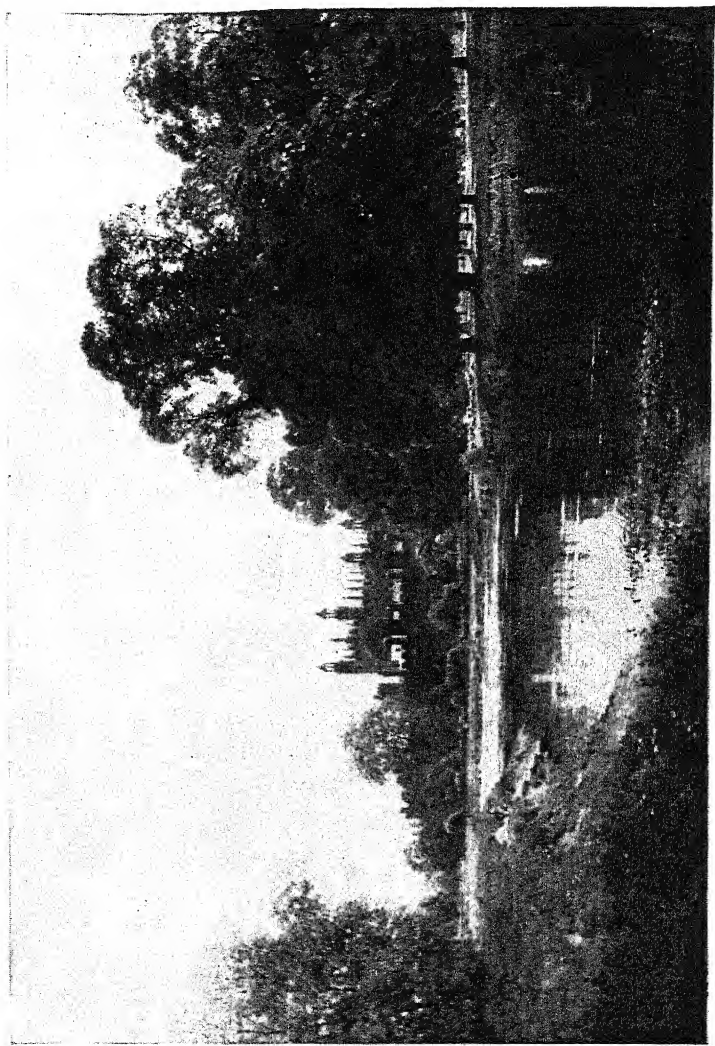
The chief boat-races at Oxford are rowed in the middle of the summer term—the May Eights. Then the colleges struggle with each other for the honour of being "Head of the River," the title held by the winning eight. The boats do not race side by side, for the river is not wide enough for that ; they race in a long line, with an equal distance between each pair of boats. When the starting-gun fires, each crew pulls with all its might to catch the crew ahead. If one boat

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overlaps another and touches it, a "bump" is made, and the bumped boat has lost its place. Next day—for the races are held day after day for a week—the winning boat goes up one place, and tries to catch the next boat, and so on, until the races are over. Then the boat which has taken or kept the head of the line is hailed as "Head of the River." Here is an account of a bump :

"The Eights : Brilliant blue sky above, glinting blue water beneath. Down across Christchurch meadow troops a butterfly crowd, flaunting brilliant parasols and chattering gaily to the 'flannelled fools' who form the escort. Despite the laughter, it is a solemn occasion, for the college boat that is Head of the River may be going to be bumped this afternoon, and if so, the bump will surely take place in front of the barges. The only question is, before which barge will it happen ? When the exciting moment draws near, chatter ceases, and tense stillness holds the crowd in thrall. The relentless pursuers creep on steadily, narrowing the gap between themselves and the first boat, and finally bump it exactly opposite its own barge ! A moment's pause. The completeness of the triumph is too impressive to be grasped at once ; then pandemonium—pistol-shots, rattles, hoots, yells, shrieks of joy, wildly waving parasols, and groans."

From the river some of the most striking and beautiful pictures of Oxford may be gained. As the stream winds and turns, the pinnacles, spires, and domes of this most lovely city group themselves in ever-changing combinations, and draw the eye until



THE RIVER THAMES AT ETON. Page 31.





## Old Father Thames

Oxford is lost to view behind the lofty elms and the alders which fringe the stream.

Below Oxford the river runs quietly along between rich meadows which in spring and early summer are carpeted with lovely wild-flowers, past quaint old houses and riverside inns, under straggling and picturesque old bridges, and ripples over fords where heavy cart-horses splash knee-deep through the clear shining stream. Here and there are pleasant villages on the bank, each with its old church, whose graveyard is shaded by great yews and entered by a quaint lych-gate.

Or the larger towns on the Thames, Reading is among the most important. But we shall not speak of the busy Reading of to-day, with its seed-gardens and biscuit factories, but of long-ago Reading, when its great abbey was flourishing, and its Abbot one of the chief men in England.

Once when Henry VIII. was hunting in Windsor Forest, he lost his way, and arrived at the Abbey of Reading about dinner-time. He concealed his rank, and announced that he was one of the King's guard, and, in this character, was invited to the Abbot's table. A sirloin of beef was set on the table, and the hungry King made such play with his knife and fork that the Abbot could not but observe it.

"Ah," said the Abbot, "I would give a hundred pounds could I but feed on beef so heartily as you do. But my stomach is so weak that I can scarce digest a small rabbit or a chicken."

Bluff King Hal laughed and pledged his host in

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wine, thanked him for the good dinner, then went without giving any hint who he was.

A few weeks later some of the King's men came to the abbey, seized the Abbot, and carried him off to the Tower. Here he was shut up and fed on bread and water, and between this wretched food and his fears of the King's displeasure the poor Abbot had a very hard time.

Then one day a fine sirloin of beef was brought into his cell, and the famished priest leapt to the table and ate like a hungry farmer. In sprang Henry from a private place, where he had been watching his prisoner eat.

"Now, Sir Abbot," cried the King, "down with your hundred pounds, for of a surety I have found your appetite for you." Whereupon the Abbot paid up at once and went home, lighter in purse, but merry at heart to find that the King sought his money and not his head.

### OLD FATHER THAMES—II.

BELOW Reading the Thames becomes "the playground of London." All the summer long its bosom is dotted with boats, and the lawns upon its banks are filled with people who have fled from "town" to rest their eyes on green fields and the shining stretches of cool running water, so delightful after the heat and glare of London.

Many holiday-makers actually live on the river in a house-boat, a broad, flat-bottomed craft upon which a

## Old Father Thames

kind of wooden house is built, and moored in the stream. Others traverse the river in a rowing-boat, carrying tents and camping at night in a meadow beside the stream.

Going down-river from Reading, we come to Henley, where the noted regatta is held every year in the first week of July. It is the greatest of all river regattas, and the most famous boat clubs of the world send crews to Henley.

On a fine day of the Henley week the course presents a most striking and brilliant scene. The river is packed from side to side with boats of every size and kind—skiffs, punts, canoes—filled with ladies in pretty summer dresses and men in cool white flannels. The sides of the river are lined with house-boats, each bearing a gaily-dressed crowd and decked with beautiful flowers. Pennons and flags and streamers flutter in the sunshine, and the wonderful mingling of bright colours in the moving crowds on land and water presents one of the gayest and prettiest scenes in the world.

Suddenly a bell rings. Clear the course! A race is about to begin. Now the boats are pulled hastily to the side of the river, where the course is marked off by piles and booms. It seems impossible for the river full of craft to pack itself away along the sides, but in some fashion or other it is managed—skiffs, canoes, and punts all wedged together like sardines in a tin.

Then a shout rings along the banks—"They're off! they're off!" and all crane their necks to catch the first glimpse of the racing boats. Soon the long

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slender boats come dashing past, the eight men in each craft pulling with tremendous power, and the little cox crouching in the stern, tiller ropes in hand. Then rises a great outburst of cheers as the friends of the winners hail the victory.

Among the beautiful houses which stand upon the bank of the stream below Henley, there is one ancient and noble hall which forms a striking picture from the river. This is Bisham Abbey, where Queen Elizabeth was once a prisoner during her sister's reign, a house of many stories and legends. One of these stories tells that "the house is haunted by a certain Lady Hoby, who beat her little boy to death because he could not write without blots. She goes about wringing her hands and trying to cleanse them from indelible inkstains. The story has probably some foundation, for a number of copybooks of the age of Elizabeth were discovered behind one of the shutters during some later alterations, and one of these was deluged in every line with blots. We all know that great severity was exercised by parents with their children at that time ; and the story, if not the ghost, may safely be accepted."

On we go, past the lovely wooded cliffs of Cliveden, through the well-known Boulter's Lock, and away downstream, till we see a mighty tower rise high above the river, and know that we are looking on the noble Round Tower which crowns Windsor Castle, the home of English kings. Near the river the castle looks very fine, its irregular pile of buildings rising in a series of rough levels, adorned by turrets, towers, and pinnacles,

## Old Father Thames

until the whole is topped and dominated by the mighty Round Tower built by Edward III., the hero of the French wars.

Since the days of the first Norman, Windsor Castle has been a favourite abode of English royalty. Other palaces have been built, to fall into neglect and decay, but Windsor has stood on its hill beside the Thames for more than 800 years, and it has been a royal castle all the time.

Opposite Windsor, most famous of all English palaces, stands Eton, most famous of all English schools. From the well-known North Terrace of Windsor Castle—open to the public from sunrise to sunset—it is possible to obtain a fine view of the great school. “We can look down on the whole of Eton—the church, with its tall spire; the buttresses and pinnacles of the chapel standing up white against an indigo background; the red and blue roofs piled this way and that; and the green playing-fields, girdled by the swift river.”

The Thames is a great playground of the Eton boys. They row on it, and bathe in it. At the great Eton festival, on June 4, there is a procession of boats on the river, when the boys, dressed in quaint costumes, row to a small islet and return to the meadows beside the stream. There are two bathing-places—one, a small backwater, called Cuckoo Weir, where the lower boys bathe. Here is held the swimming trial which a boy must pass before he can go out boating. The other bathing-place, known by the fine title of Athens, is in the main river, and is used by the bigger boys.

A short distance downstream is the historic mead

## England

whose name is familiar on every lip. It is a quiet, smooth meadow beside the river, and it is Runnymede, or Runney Mead, where King John signed Magna Charta, and so made a beginning of English freedom. There is now an island in the Thames at that spot called Magna Charta Island, but it is not thought that the Charter was signed there. It is believed that John and the barons met on the mainland, the King riding down from Windsor to meet his offended subjects.

Below Windsor the Thames flows past many well-known riverside towns, and at last meets the tide. The sea is still nearly seventy miles away, but salt water now mingles with the fresh of the brooks and rills which have made up the great river, and a change takes place—the stream of pleasure becomes more and more a stream of busy trade. “Though pleasure-boats are to be seen in quantities any summer evening about Putney; though market-gardens still border the banks at Fulham, yet the river is for the greater part lined with wharves and piers and embankments. It is no wild thing running loose, but a strong worker full of earnest purpose. It is the great river without which there would have been no London, the river which bears the largest trade the world has ever known.”

### IN A CATHEDRAL CITY.

THE cathedral cities of England are among the chief glories of our land, and the charm of these ancient places is only felt to the full when the splendid church

## In a Cathedral City

dominates absolutely over the city clustered around it. A cathedral in a place which has swelled to a big modern town may be interesting, but it lacks the appropriate setting: it should stand in the midst of a small, old city, whose streets are narrow and winding; whose houses are gabled, lattice-paned, and with overhanging storeys; whose medieval walls may still be traced, and the mouldering keep of whose ruined castle may still be climbed.

First of all English cathedral cities stands Canterbury, with its splendid church, raised upon the spot where first Christianity flourished in Britain. Kent was the cradle of the English race in England, and to Kent came St. Augustine, preaching the Christian faith to Ethelbert, Saxon king, who listened and believed.

There was already a ruined church, it is believed, in Canterbury—a church built by Roman or British Christians—and this was restored and reconsecrated by the missionary bishop. In time this church grew into a great cathedral, but in 1011 the Danes attacked the city, plundered, slaughtered, and burned and destroyed the place. Again and again fire wrought much harm, until in 1174 the cathedral suffered utter ruin by a tremendous outbreak, and was reduced to ashes. But without delay the builders set to work, and the present glorious edifice began to rise from the ruins of the destroyed building. More than 200 years passed before the great church was completed by the building of the magnificent central tower, the famous Bell Harry Tower.

“As we stand upon the summit of Bell Harry Tower—more happily called the Angel Steeple—of

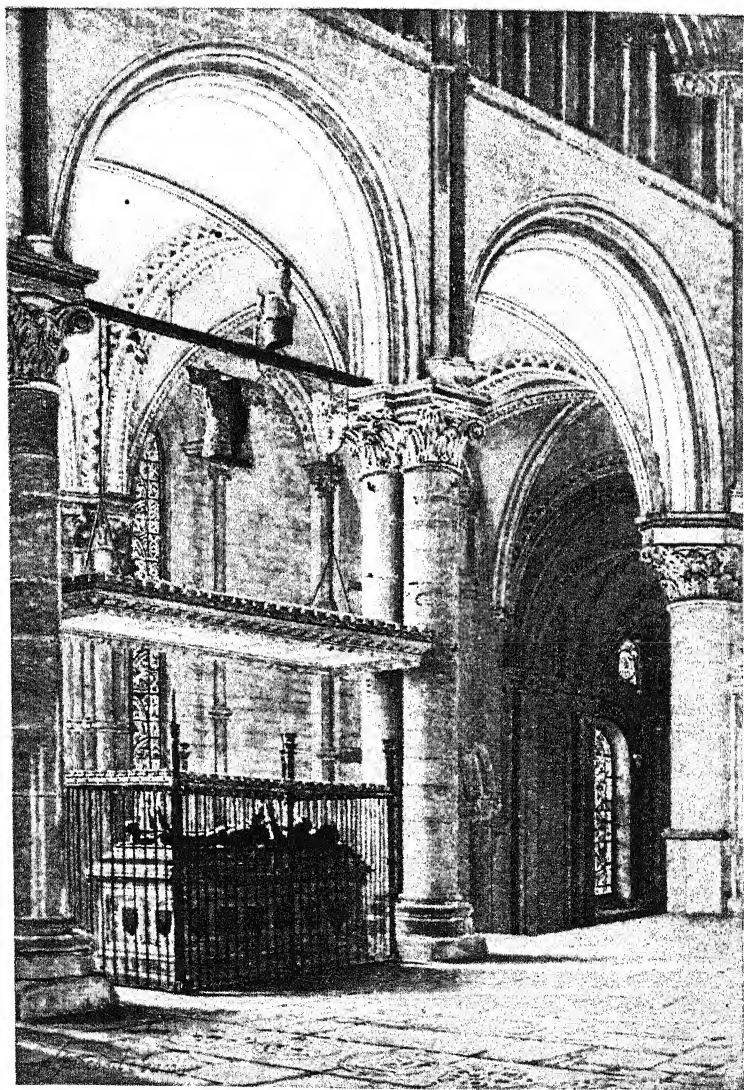
## England

Canterbury Cathedral, looking down upon city and countryside, much of the history of England lies spread beneath our feet : the Britons were at work here before the Romans came marching with their stolid legions ; here to Ethelbert St. Augustine preached the Gospel of Christ ; in the church below, Becket was murdered and the Black Prince buried ; to this city, to the shrine of St. Thomas, came innumerable pilgrims, one of them our first great English poet. . . . Away to the east and south are the narrow seas, crossed by conquering Romans and Normans, crossed for centuries by a constant stream of travellers from all ends of the earth, citizens of every clime, to some of whom the sight of the English coast was the first glimpse of home, to others the first view of a strange land ; away to the north and west are the Medway and the Thames, Rochester and London. From no other tower, perhaps, can so wide a bird's-eye view of our history be obtained ; Canterbury is so situated that ever since England has been, and as long as England shall be, this city has been and will be a centre of the nation's life."

Round the cathedral lies its close, and a cathedral close is one of the quietest, quaintest, pleasantest places in the world. Clustered in shadow of the great building lie the houses of the clergy who serve in the cathedral—the bishop, the dean, the canons—and their dwellings are fenced off from the streets without, and kept private from all noise and traffic. The cathedral close is entered by a low grey gateway in an ancient wall, and within we find quaint old houses with oriel







TOMB OF THE BLACK PRINCE

IN CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL. *Page 26*

## In a Cathedral City

and bay windows, each kept in the trimmest order, with its neatly-railed grass plot in front, and its garden behind, where peaches and nectarines ripen on sunny walls.

From this haunt of ancient peace we will go into the great building and visit the Martyrdom, the place where stood the shrine of Thomas Becket, St. Thomas of Canterbury, whom the four knights of Henry II. slew in 1170.

For hundreds of years the people of England looked upon Becket as a martyr and a saint, and went on pilgrimage to visit his tomb. One company or pilgrims lives for ever in the verse of Geoffrey Chaucer, the great fourteenth-century poet; they ride from London to Canterbury in a right merry fellowship, and tell tales to pass the time on the way—the ever-famous “Canterbury Pilgrims.” But throngs without number of wayfarers who have found no such splendid chronicler marched to the city where the bones of the martyr lay under Bell Harry Tower, and their offerings made the shrine glorious with gold and gems.

A Venetian who saw the shrine about the year 1500 says: “The tomb of St. Thomas the Martyr, Archbishop of Canterbury, exceeds all belief. Notwithstanding its great size, it is wholly covered with plates of pure gold; yet the gold is scarcely seen because it is covered with various precious stones, as sapphires, diamonds, rubies, and emeralds; and wherever the eye turns something more beautiful than the rest is observed.”

This shrine blazed with gold and jewels until the

## England

Reformation, when it was destroyed and its treasures seized by Henry VIII. ; to-day nothing of it remains.

The second greatest memory of the cathedral is that of the Black Prince ; his tomb stands in the chapel where once stood the shrine of Becket. "A splendid figure of romance he was—a great fighter, and, as such, beloved of his race ; the boy victor of Cressy ; the conqueror at Poitiers, where the French King became his captive ; in his life the glory of his country, by his untimely death leaving it to anarchy and civil war. We stand by his tomb, looking upon his effigy, which is life-like in its strength. 'There he lies : no other memorial of him exists in the world so authentic. There he lies, as he had directed, in full armour, his head resting on his helmet, his feet with the likeness of "the spurs he won" at Cressy, his hands joined as in that last prayer which he had offered up on his death-bed.' Above the canopy hang his gauntlets, his helm, his velvet coat that once blazed with the arms of England and of France, and the empty scabbard of his sword."

But when we have looked upon all the solemn beauties of the great church ; when we have seen the quaintly beautiful old houses of the city about it ; when we have visited St. Martin's, the oldest church in England ; when we have walked round Dune John, that mysterious mound which no one can explain, still we must not leave without seeing the oldest by far of all the old things of this old city.

What is it? A small lane, no more, no less—a narrow trackway which one would pass without noticing, if he

## Through Wessex

did not know it was the famous Pilgrims Way, the Old Road, the ancient trackway which ran westwards from Kent to Cornwall, and existed in days when no such names were known in the land. In the history of this lane, the name of the Pilgrims' Way is a modern title; it existed long before pilgrims were known, and it was used in the dim, far-off dawn of civilization when skin-clothed Britons carried their loads of metal eastwards to send them across the narrow seas. How old it is no man can say, but it runs along ridge and height, showing that it was marked out in times when the lower-lying country was impassable owing to marsh and woodland.

### THROUGH WESSEX—I.

"WESSEX?" you say. "What county is that? We know Essex and Sussex, but where is Wessex?" Well, it is not a county, and you will not find the name on a map of England; but it is a good English name for all that, and once was the name of an important English kingdom.

When Alfred the Great became King, he ruled over Wessex, the south-western part of England, and the old name still clings to the district, which is now cut up into several modern counties.

Wessex is a land of downs and dales, and broad stretches of fertile country. It is the home of the chalk hills—those great, smooth, rolling heights, covered with short, sweet grass, on which great flocks of sheep pasture and speck the vast slopes with dots of white.

## England

“There is hardly any part of our land which has remained so little unchanged as these Downs of Wessex. It is not because they are rugged and difficult to climb : they are not ; they are often easy to surmount. There are far wilder and higher looking hills in both Wales and Scotland, which have inhabitants, which are ploughed in patches and dotted with whitewashed cottages. Yet the Downs remain lonely, their sky-line unbroken by any sign of the presence of man. Just as the Roman saw them from his trireme, the Saxon from his long ship, the Dane from his war-boat, so we see them to-day—great solitary green mounds, 600, 700, 800 feet high.”

Why is this ? The answer is simple. They lack water. Down their sides flow no brooks, babbling from stone to stone ; they are waterless, and therefore treeless and houseless. They get plenty of rain, of course, for when the sou'-westers blow up from the Atlantic they are drenched by many a heavy storm. But the water does not run down their sides as a river, or gather in their hollows as a lake. The chalk of which they are composed is too porous for that, and the rain sinks swiftly and is lost.

Water is so abundant in almost every part of our land that we are inclined to forget that the first need of a house is its water-supply. He who thinks to build on the Downs must first reckon how deep a well he must dig through the chalk before the water can be reached. And he finds that the cost of obtaining water is so great that he must build his house elsewhere. One or two houses have been built high up on the

## Through Wessex

Downs by wealthy people who were resolved to carry out a fancy. In winter the water-supply is furnished by the rain which falls on the roofs; in summer it is carted from the valley at great expense.

In some parts of the Downs water is obtained by dew-pans or dew-ponds. A space is hollowed out, as a rule, near the summit of a hill. It is circular in form, and of no great depth. It is coated with clay or cement, or some material which prevents the passage of water, and it then fills with dew and rain, and, strange to say, many of these dew-ponds never fail after they have once filled. You may visit them in perfect certainty of obtaining some water.

“Those who best know the Downs, and have lived among them all their lives, can testify how, for a whole day's march, one may never meet a man's face; or, if one meets it, it will be the face of some shepherd, who may be standing lonely, with his dog beside him, upon the flank of a green hill, and with his flock scattered all around.”

Another great feature of Wessex is its broad heaths—great sweeps of country dark with furze and gorse and heath, save when they blaze in May with the yellow blossoms of the gorse, or glow in autumn with the purple of the heather.

And bordering these heaths and downs are great stretches of smiling meadow and corn land, dotted by quaint and beautiful townlets and villages. Of large towns there are but few, for Wessex knows nothing of the toil and turmoil of great industrial centres. She tills her land and tends her flocks, and those occupations

## England

mean old farmhouses and cottages, half-timbered or stone-built, roofed with red tiles or grey thatch, and little country towns, silent and sleepy save on market-days, when the farmers and dealers come in and buy and sell their cattle and their produce.

The coast of Wessex is washed by the English Channel, and through all our history no other part of our coast-line has been so busy with sailors and shipping as that which looks upon the narrow seas.

The Roman, the Saxon, the Dane, have landed at its river-mouths, and marched inland. In later days, the pirates which swarmed along the Channel have attacked and plundered its towns. All through the Middle Ages the citizens of the little towns along the shore had to be prepared at any moment to beat off the attacks of freebooters who sought plunder wherever it was to be found. Thus, in 1338, Southampton was attacked suddenly by pirates on a Sunday when the people of the town were in church, and the town was plundered and burned.

To this day the visitor notes with wonder the size and strength of some old parish churches along the coast. They seem needlessly large in view of the small population of the village, and also needlessly strong. But 500 years ago the church was also the fortress of the place. When news was brought that an enemy was near at hand, all fled into the church for protection; and while the women and children crouched before the altar, where the priest prayed for the rout of the foe, the men strung their bows, and prepared to launch showers of arrows from every window and loophole.



## Through Wessex

All through the long French wars the Wessex ports were in the thick of the fray, fitting out privateers and supplying men for the Navy. Along these coasts the press-gangs were very busy when sailors were needed for the fleet and not enough men had volunteered. The press-gang was a body of seamen, commanded by a naval officer, and sent out to seize men and carry them on board ship by force. Tales are told to this day in Wessex of a press-gang marching into a village at dead of night and rushing into cottages to drag men out of bed and make them prisoners to serve the King at sea. Sometimes the ploughman was snatched from his plough, the shepherd from his flock. At times these men returned after many years' absence to tell of their lives on board a man-o'-war, and the battles fought with Britain's enemies; others were never heard of again in their native place.

### THROUGH WESSEX—II.

THE time of the French wars, too, was the time when the smugglers were in their glory. The Government laid heavy duties on spirits, lace, and such things, and employed a large body of officers, called "preventive men," to watch the seaports and coasts, and take care that no such articles came into the land without paying duty.

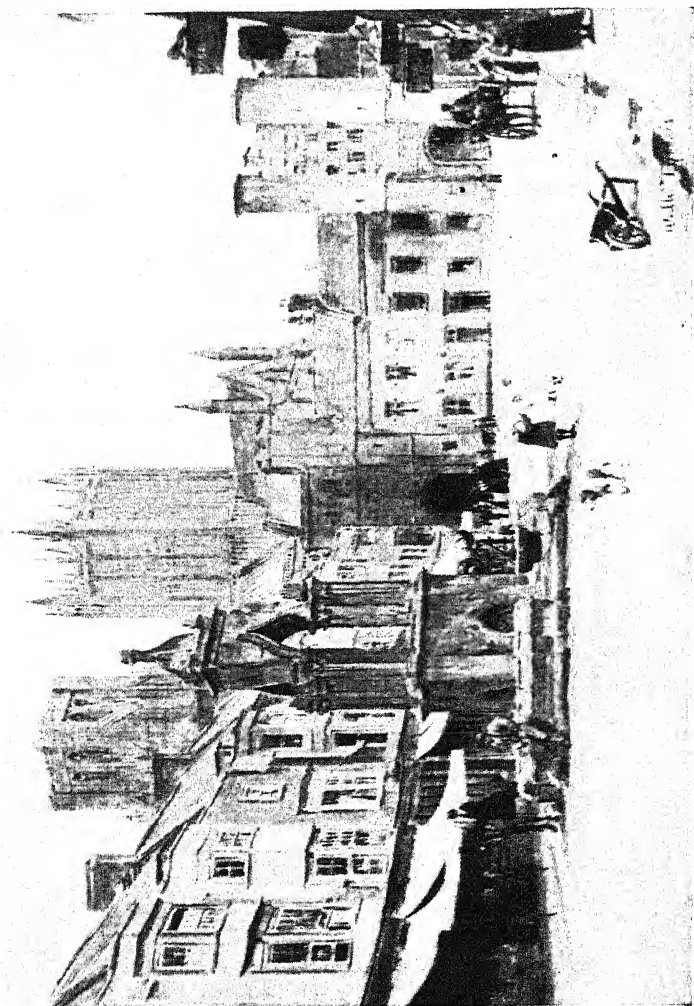
But, for all that, many and many a cask of brandy and parcel of lace came over from France, and was smuggled ashore under cover of night, or upon some very lonely stretch of coast. The usual method of

## England

the smugglers was this: a vessel laden with contraband goods would appear at an arranged place upon an arranged time. With the darkness of night a number of boats put off to her and received the cargo, and pulled back to the beach. Here would be a band of comrades with a number of strong, swift horses. The horses were loaded with the casks and bundles, and then away they were driven full-gallop up-country towards a safe hiding-place, where the goods could be stored until sold.

The trade was very profitable, for the duty was so heavy that the smuggler, if he made a successful run, could sell his goods far more cheaply than a merchant who had paid duty, and could yet make a large profit. But the preventive officers were always on the watch, and it was a constant struggle between them and the smugglers. Sometimes the officers won. They caught the smugglers and captured the goods. But the smugglers often showed fight, and when both parties were well armed, the affair would become a pitched battle, in which men were killed or wounded on both sides.

As a rule, however, the smugglers depended on hoodwinking and eluding the preventive men, and endless were their devices to gain their ends. Sometimes a vessel appeared off the coast behaving in a suspicious manner and leading the officers to believe she carried a cargo of contraband goods. At nightfall she exchanged signals with the shore, but when she was boarded, nothing wrong could be discovered. She was merely a decoy, and while the preventive men had



IN AN ENGLISH COUNTRY TOWN.



## Through Wessex

been kept busy with her movements, another vessel had landed a cargo at some other point along the coast.

Along the shore are still to be seen many old houses, where devices have been arranged to aid smugglers. There may be a secret cellar entered by a hidden door, where casks were placed till the officers were out of the way, or a sliding panel in the wainscot, worked by a spring, is the door of a cupboard where bundles of lace could be concealed. Then there are secret hiding-places for the smugglers themselves when pursued by their enemies. In one house there is a stone wall which looks perfectly solid. But if a particular stone be pressed, a piece of the wall swings aside and gives entrance to a tiny closet built in the thickness of the wall. Here is just room for a man to hide, and when the door is closed on him, no one who does not understand the secret could discover where he is.

But the smugglers would soon have been suppressed had they not had many friends in the countryside. Many a farmer took care to turn a blind eye when he suspected that the smugglers were using one of his barns or sheds as a hiding-place. He knew very well that when they went he would find a cask left behind, and he took it, and nothing was said. The preventive officers made capture of contraband goods in the strangest of places—in the cellars of squires, who were justices of the peace and supposed to aid them, and more than once in a church, where a parish clerk or sexton, in league with the smugglers, had stowed away the forbidden casks and bales.

## England

As for the smugglers themselves, they practised a thousand tricks to outwit their enemies of the law : they shod their horses backwards to throw their pursuers off the scent, they gave false information to draw the officers astray, they tried every device known to outwit them. One day a very active and zealous officer, much dreaded by the smugglers of his neighbourhood, made his appearance in a small fishing village at a very awkward time. In a cove below the cliff there was a string of loaded horses waiting for the darkness to come up the cliff road and gallop inland with their burdens. The preventive officer rode up to the inn, where the landlord, secretly quaking, for he was one of the smugglers, made a great show of welcoming him.

In a short time there was an uproar in the village street ; one of the fishermen appeared to be beating his wife severely, and there was a great hubbub for a time. Before long the ill-treated woman came into the room where the officer was making a meal, and, apparently in a state of anger and agitation, accused her husband of being a smuggler, and offered to post the officer in a spot where he should have ample evidence of the guilt of the villagers.

“I’ll put ye within a yard of ’em as they pass by,” said the woman, “and then ye can get all their names and know where they are.”

The officer, feeling sure that she was inspired by a spirit of revenge, agreed to follow her directions, and, as dusk began to settle down, he crept quietly to the back of her house, a spot which overlooked the cliff road.

## Through Wessex

The woman met him, and cautioned him not to make a sound. "For," said she, "if they get to know of ye, they'll take your life; they be such terrible smugglers hereabouts."

She bade him get into a large cask beside the back-door, and pointed out that he could see all who passed through the bung-hole. Eager to discover the smugglers and the way they would take, he did so. But no sooner was the unlucky man in the cask than a cover was popped on it by the woman's husband, hidden near at hand, and the cover was held down until it was firmly secured by hammer and nails. Then a spigot was driven into the bung-hole, and a voice shouted, "Come on, boys! We've boxed him up."

At the next moment the preventive officer heard the tramp of hoofs as the horses filed past the cask where he was shut up in utter darkness. The whole thing had been a trick from beginning to end. The quarrel between husband and wife had been a sham one, intended to lure the officer into the trap, and there he was fast in the cask; nor was he released until the smugglers were far beyond reach of pursuit.

### THROUGH WESSEX—III.

WESSEX has many beautiful and peaceful country towns, and of these an admirable example may be seen in Dorchester, the county town of Dorsetshire, a place often called the capital of Wessex. This very ancient town has seen the whole of the history of Wessex, the

## England

land of the West Saxons. Before a Saxon settled in the country it was a splendid city, the home of Roman nobles and the camp of Roman soldiery. The Romans knew it as Durnovaria, and they filled it with houses and adorned it with temples and theatres. To this day Roman remains are being discovered. An old house is pulled down and the foundations cleared away, and in the work the diggers come upon pavements which were laid down by Roman hands and trodden by Roman feet. Very often pottery and ornaments are discovered, and now and again a more striking relic still—the pick strikes into a Roman grave and lays bare a manly form which once marched with the legions, or the figure of a Roman maiden, whose ornaments still lie among her mortal remains.

After the Romans came the Saxons, and Dorchester was still a place of much importance. In 1003, Sweyn of Denmark plundered and burned the place and overthrew the walls in revenge for the massacre of Danes on St. Brice's Day in the previous year. But the town was soon rebuilt, and its history runs on through the centuries with outbreaks of fire and plague and records of martyrdoms, until war visited it again during the great Civil War. Dorchester stood against Charles, and saw some severe skirmishing in its neighbourhood, but no fighting of any great importance. But the reign of Charles's second son, James II., saw Dorchester leap into terrible prominence, for here, on September 3, 1685, was opened the "Bloody Assize." Sedgemoor had been fought, the rebellion of Monmouth had been broken, and the in-



## Through Wessex

famous Judge Jeffreys had come down to the West to strike terror into the hearts of all who had wished well to Monmouth.

More than 300 people had been crammed into Dorchester Gaol, and nearly all of them were condemned to death. Of these, some forty or fifty were executed, and others condemned to be whipped in terribly severe fashion, and to suffer long terms of imprisonment and heavy fines.

After the Monmouth Rebellion, Dorchester sank back into the peaceful history of a quiet country town—a history unbroken, save for local events of fire and storm, until to-day. The town still preserves much of its ancient character, and is a most interesting and picturesque place, and, on market-days, is thronged by people of typical Wessex appearance—dealers, farmers, carters, labourers, and pedlars.

To the south of the town stands a great amphitheatre, which is said to have been built by the Romans about the time of Agricola. It is called Maumbury Rings, and is a series of raised mounds enclosing an open space. It is calculated that some 12,000 spectators could have been seated round the amphitheatre, each enjoying an excellent view of the combats of gladiators or wild beasts in the arena below.

But a still more wonderful relic of former days is to be seen two miles south of Dorchester—the huge British earthwork, now known as Maiden Castle. It is an immense camp or hill-fort, built on the flat summit of a natural hill, and it must have cost the Britons who built it an immense amount of labour. It is the greatest

## England

British camp in existence, stretching 1,000 yards from east to west, and 500 from north to south, and enclosing an area of 45 acres. The whole is surrounded, in some places with two, and in others with three, ramparts nearly 60 feet high, and very steep. When these ramparts were manned by the warriors of the British tribe gathered within the fort, it was no easy place to storm.

Wessex has not many rivers, and most of them are not of any great size, but they are famous among fishermen for the splendid trout which they breed. These streams, running through the chalk, are marvellously clear; in many cases the stones may be counted at the bottom of a pool 10 or 12 feet deep, and this clearness makes the catching of the trout and grayling which live in them no easy affair.

The largest Wessex river is the Avon, which flows past Salisbury Plain, with its wonderful monument of Stonehenge; passes through Salisbury, whose beautiful cathedral spire is a famous landmark, and runs into the English Channel.

Stonehenge is the most ancient of all the ancient monuments of Wessex. We say that this camp was the work of the Britons; that pavement was laid by the Romans; but no one knows what manner of men raised the mighty standing-stones at Stonehenge. Nor do we really know why they were raised. We believe it was for the purpose of worship—that the stones form an ancient temple—but of this we cannot be quite sure.

Stonehenge consists of two circles of great stones, set upright in the ground. Across some of these stones

## Through Wessex

others are placed to form arches, and though many have been broken or thrown down, there are still enough of them in position to show us the original shape of Stonehenge. The outer circle is about 100 yards round, and was formed by huge monoliths or single blocks of stone, each 15 feet high and 7 feet broad. The inner circle is 8 feet from the outer, and is composed of smaller stones about 6 feet high. There are two ovals, formed of large stones, and the inner oval contains a huge slab of rock, which is thought to have been an altar.

The question at once springs to our lips, Who raised these enormous blocks of stone, and set them up in so exact a fashion? It is one which learned men are unable to answer. The general opinion is that Stonehenge was formed as a temple for the worship led by the Druids, the priests of the ancient Britons, but of this one cannot be certain. The men who built Stonehenge have left no other record of their mighty labours save the vast stones they raised, and the secret of this most ancient monument is lost in the darkness of prehistoric days.

## ROUND THE TORS.

If we journey on south-west beyond the chalk ranges of Wessex we come to a very different country indeed : we enter on a land of granite hills. The granite rocks are as different as possible from the chalk heights. Instead of rounded slopes, we see sharp, jagged peaks and broken,

## England

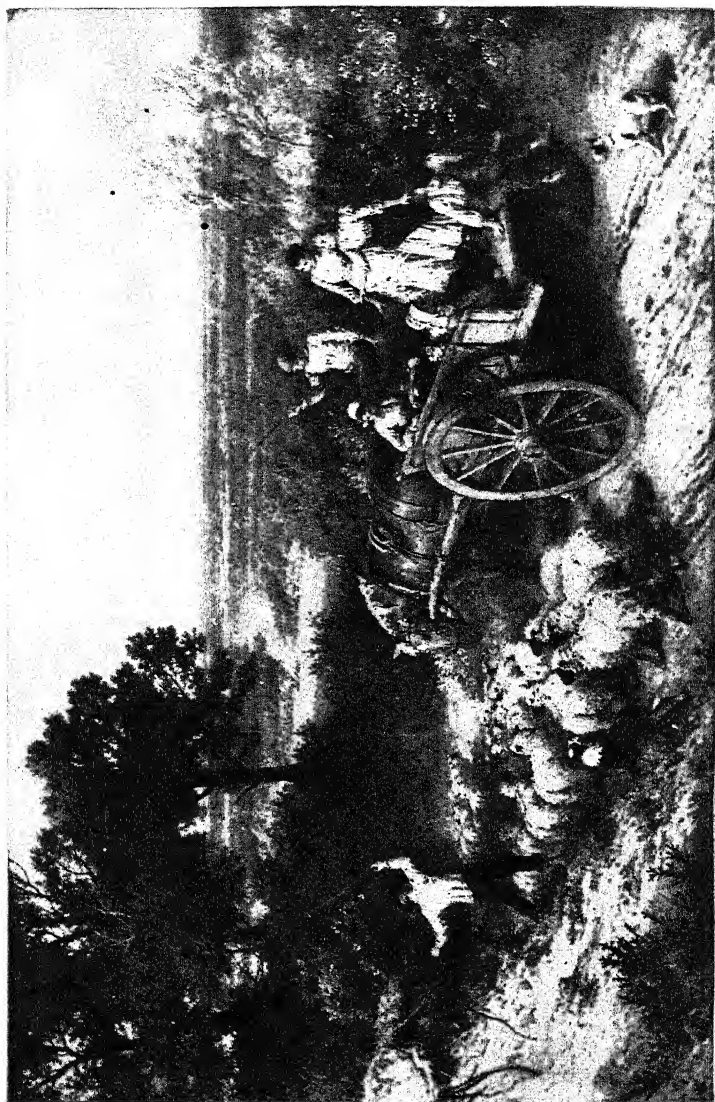
rocky ridges. The smooth, open stretches of turf are exchanged for wild, heathery moorland, broken by deep dells, and the waterless chalk slopes are replaced by glens, through which leap foaming torrents.

The granite hills rise to their wildest at Dartmoor, in the centre of the county of Devon. Dartmoor is a great tableland, from which spring granite heights rising to nearly 1,800 feet above the sea. For the most part Dartmoor is uncultivated, a wilderness of barren moorland, with lofty hills and jagged tors on every hand, here and there scored by narrow valleys, which are often strewn with huge boulders of granite.

The tors are huge knobs or humps of granite, and the word has the same meaning as "tower." The most famous of them all is Yes Tor. Round these tors stretch great sweeps of moor and morass. Nothing lives here save the moorland sheep, who crop the rough grass between the tufts of heather, and the hardy moor ponies—nimble, shaggy, little creatures, with long manes and tails, quick as deer and surefooted as goats.

In the midst of this desolate country stands a great prison—Dartmoor Convict Prison. The place was chosen so that no convict could hope to escape. Many of the prisoners go out by day to work in the fields around the prison. They are closely watched by warders armed with rifles. But for all that, now and again a convict makes an attempt to escape; yet, though he sometimes gets away from the warders and is free for a few hours, he is almost certain to be recaptured. He finds that he has only got into a larger prison—the prison of the moorland. There are no woods, so he





## Round the Tors

cannot hide himself, and he cannot strike which way he pleases, for there are the bogs to think of.

In many places there are deep morasses in which a man would sink and be swallowed up by the soft mud. So the escaped prisoner dare not move by night lest he should run into a bog ; then by day, if he attempts to traverse the country, he is soon seen ; so that it is almost impossible to escape from Dartmoor.

Another stretch of country dotted with tors and covered with moorland is Exmoor, in the north of Devon. The hills of Exmoor are famous for their ponies and for being the haunts of the wild red-deer, which are sometimes hunted with staghounds.

But not all the countryside consists of rocky tablelands, strewn with craggy masses of granite. Far from it. Round these tors lies some of the most beautiful and fertile land in all England. North and south of Dartmoor are sweeps of country which yield the richest farm and dairy produce to be found anywhere. Famous breeds of cattle and sheep graze in the pastures. Devonshire "cream" is known and loved wherever it goes, and luscious cider is made from the apples of its splendid orchards.

Great numbers of visitors every year are drawn to this fair county to behold its beauties and to stroll through the Devonshire lanes. A Devonshire lane in the cultivated portion of the countryside has hardly its like elsewhere. The land is red, the earth of the soft red sandstone, and through this land the lanes run in deep, hollow ways, often so deep that a carriage is quite hidden from the view of one standing in the fields on

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either hand. One writer speaks of driving in a dogcart along one of these deep lanes on a day in late autumn, when he heard the cry of hounds. The hunt was coming his way, and he drew rein. Presently the hunt went whirling by, literally over his head. Horsemen and horsewomen cleared the lane, one after the other, in flying leaps, the big hunters taking the huge trench with tremendous bounds.

These trench-like lanes have been formed by the wear and tear of ages of traffic. In the soft red soil the crunch of wheels and the stamp of hoofs have worn the surface down and down, and rain has washed away the loose soil, until the lane itself has become, as it were, one vast rut.

"As lovely as a Devonshire lane" is a proverb; the rich red soil and the soft warm air of this southern county work together to form a scene of wonderful charm. The steep banks are one glorious mass of ferns, wild-flowers, and shrubs during spring and summer; in autumn they burn with the fires of the fading leaves; in winter they are bright with berries.

The coast-line of this region is very beautiful, whether it faces north or south, to the Atlantic Ocean or the English Channel. On the north there are great beetling cliffs, with lovely valleys, called "combes," running down to the sea between them. In describing the port of Bideford, Kingsley gives us an admirable idea of North Devon scenery on the first page of "Westward Ho!": "All who have travelled through the delicious scenery of North Devon must needs know the little white town of Bideford, which slopes upwards from its



## Round the Tors

broad tide-river paved with yellow sands, and many-arched old bridge, where salmon wait for autumn's floods, toward the pleasant upland on the west.' Above the town the hills close in, cushioned with deep oak woods, through which juts here and there a crag of fern-fringed slate; below they lower, and open more and more in softly-rounded knolls and fertile squares of red and green, till they sink into the wide expanse of hazy flats, rich salt marshes, and rolling sand-hills, where Torridge joins her sister Taw, and both together flow quietly toward the broad surges of the bay and the everlasting thunder of the long Atlantic swell. Pleasantly the old town stands there, beneath its soft Italian sky, fanned day and night by the fresh ocean breeze, which forbids alike the keen winter frosts and the fierce thunder heats of the midland."

A little to the west of Bideford lies the fishing village of Clovelly, famous for its striking position and the great beauty of its surroundings. Clovelly lies in the cleft of a tall cliff, and its single street straggles up and down the steep rock, upon which the houses are perched in every nook and corner where room to set a building could be found. All about the place are wooded cliffs, and for quaint old-world beauty this village is declared to be unmatched along the whole English coast-line.

Near Torquay, a well-known watering-place of South Devon, is a very remarkable cave called Kent's Cavern. You gain it by a hole in the rock, 7 feet wide and only 5 feet high; but inside you find a great cavern, 600 feet long, with many smaller caves and corridors branching away through the limestone rock.

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This cavern was once the home of cave-men, those long-vanished inhabitants of our land. This has been proved by searching the floor of the cave. Deep down were discovered human bones and the remains of tools and weapons. Mingled with these were the bones of the elephant and the rhinoceros, the hyena, the bear, and the wolf. The tools and weapons were of stone, and it is plain that the men who once lived in the cave brought thither the wild animals they had slain with their arrows and spears, headed with flint. All this happened a long, long time ago, for some of the animal remains belong to creatures who have long since become extinct.

Torquay is but one of many lovely places lying along a splendid stretch of coast, for the beauties of South Devon are as striking as those of the north. Cliffs of bright red sandstone stand above the bright blue sea, and where the cliffs are absent the land falls easily to the water, warm and fruitful to the edge of the tide in that mild, genial climate.

“The rounded hills slope gently to the sea, spotted with squares of emerald grass, and rich red fallow fields, and parks full of stately timber trees. Long lines of tall elms, just flashing green in the spring hedges, run down to the very water’s edge, their boughs unwarped by any blast ; and here and there apple orchards are just bursting into flower in the soft sunshine, and narrow strips of water-meadows line the glens, where the red cattle are already lounging knee-deep in rich grass within two yards of the rocky, pebbly beach. The shore is silent now, the tide far out, but six hours hence it

## The Land of Saints

will be hurling columns of rosy foam high into the sunlight, and sprinkling passengers, and cattle, and trim gardens which hardly know what frost and snow may be, but see the flowers of autumn meet the flowers of spring, and the old year linger smilingly to twine a garland for the new."

### THE LAND OF SAINTS.

CORNWALL, that craggy promontory which England thrusts out into the Atlantic as a man might thrust out his leg, is often called the "Land of Saints." It gains this name because every other village is named after a saint, and for the most part they are saints unknown to the calendar, and never heard of in other parts of the country. There are St. Cuby and St. Tudy, St. Piran and St. Ewe, St. Blazey and St. Eve, St. Meryn and St. Buryan, St. Gennys and St. Issey, and scores of other strangely-named saints.

The names of these saints take us back to a time when England was a heathen country, and our Saxon forefathers still followed the worship of Odin and Thor. Cornwall, then, was filled with British Christians, driven west before the Saxon inroads, and the land abounded with Celtic saints, many of them from Ireland, Wales, and Brittany.

Every saint founded a church, bearing his name, and in time the village which grew up around the church took the name, and often bears it to this day. The process of founding was in this fashion: When the saint, during his wanderings through the land, came to

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a place where he thought a church was needed, he begged a small piece of land from the chief of the tribe living in that spot. Upon this patch of territory the saint abode, fasting and praying for forty days and nights, and at the end of that period the patch of land was sacred to him for ever, and bore his name. Then he and his disciples built a church there, and sometimes a monastery gathered about it. When the saint had placed all in order at one spot, he often moved on to another, and founded a fresh church there.

The old saints were much loved by the people, for they were always using their influence with the chiefs and great men on the side of mercy and kindness towards the poor and helpless. Many stories were told of them, and are still remembered. One day St. Columba was walking along the road, when he saw a poor widow gathering stinging-nettles. He asked her why she did it, and she replied that she was too poor to buy other food, and that she gathered nettles for the pot.

"Then," said Columba, "while my people are so poor, I will eat no better food."

He went back to the monastery and said to the disciple who prepared his food: "From this day I will eat nothing but nettles."

But, after a time, the disciple saw that the good old man was getting very thin and weak, and it troubled him. So he took a hollow elder-stalk, filled it with butter, and stirred the butter into the nettle-broth.

"The nettles have a new taste," said St. Columba; "they are rich and sweet. I must see what you have put into them;" and he came to see them cooked.

## The Land of Saints

"You see, master dear," said his disciple, "I do not put anything into the pot save this stick, with which I stir them."

In a rough and cruel age the saints taught people to be kind to children and to poor dumb beasts and birds. Here is a story of a saint and a child.

There was a saint whose name was St. Maccarthen, and the ruler of his countryside was King Eochaid. One day the king sent his little son with a message to the saint. The little boy's mother gave him a red, round apple to eat on the way. The boy played with his pretty apple as he went, tossing it up and catching it. As it happened, it rolled from him and was lost. The child hunted here and there until he was tired out, and as the sun was setting he laid himself down in the middle of the way and went to sleep. As he slept, St. Maccarthen came along the road. The saint at once wrapped his mantle round the sleeping child, and sat beside him all night to guard his slumber. Many people passed along the way, but the saint turned them aside, for he would neither break the child's slumber nor permit an accident to befall him.

Many a saint had not only a church named after him, but a well also. Cornwall is full of "holy wells." In former days these wells were held to possess miraculous powers, and people came from great distances to drink the sacred water and make vows to the saint in whose honour the well was named. One of the best-known of these wells is the Well of St. Keyne. It was believed that, in the case of a newly-married couple, the first to drink of the water of this well would hold the mastery

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of the household. Southey has a ballad on this subject, describing how a bridegroom hurried from the church to the well. But all in vain : his wife had taken a bottle of the water to church with her !

Cornwall is a land of bleak, rugged granite heights and desolate moors, with lovely dells nestling amid the wilderness, combes filled with trees, and fields whose grass is green the winter through. Its coast is for the most part very dangerous, with immense cliffs, broken but by few openings. It is a coast to which the sailor gives a wide berth, especially in stormy weather, and if he fails to do so, he will almost certainly pay the penalty with his life. Many terrible shipwrecks have taken place off the shores of Cornwall, especially upon the deadly Manacles, the great reef near the Lizard, and the churchyards in the neighbourhood are full of the graves of many and many a drowned man or woman tossed up on the beach near at hand.

If you should go for a stroll on the cliffs about the Lizard some fine morning in July, you would see fishermen there, smoking and staring out to sea in, as it would seem to you, an idle fashion. But, suddenly, one of them, who has been sitting on the turf, springs to his feet. He begins to leap and yell as if he had gone mad. He points out to sea, and begins to roar over the edge of the cliff to his friends below. His companions on the watch now show an equal excitement, and you wonder what it is all about. You look long at the place to which they are pointing, and at length you make out that there is a darkish patch of water over which a number of sea-birds are hovering. It is a vast



ANN HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE. *Page 53.*





## The Land of Saints

shoal of pilchards coming in-shore, and the apparent idlers on the cliff were watching for it.

The men on the cliff are called "huers"—shouters (from the French *huer*, to shout)—and their cries and signals direct their friends in the boats which way to pull to surround the shoal. From the surface the shoal cannot be seen, but the "huers" aloft can make out every movement of the vast mass of fish, and guide the fishermen below.

A pilchard is a fish which looks much like a herring, but it is smaller, though it has larger scales. The shoals appear at the end of June, but at that time they are in deep water, and the fishing-smacks sail out in search of them and put down drift-nets. These nets are hung in the water like walls of hemp set across the drift of the tide. The pilchards swim into the nets, thrust their heads through the meshes, and are caught by the gills. This kind of fishing can only be carried on by night, for the pilchards are too keen-sighted to swim into the meshes by day.

As the season advances, the pilchards come nearer in-shore, and now the great season of the pilchard-fishery arrives. A great shoal of pilchards is a marvellous sight. The sea appears to be literally packed solid with them. The surface boils with their movement, and numbers are seen leaping out of the water like trout in a stream. Now the fishermen get out their mighty seine-nets and prepare to wall up the multitude of pilchards.

Guided by the "huers," they shoot the great nets around the shoal till it is enclosed. Then smaller nets are shot into the great net, and in these the fish are

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drawn to the surface beside the waiting boats. It is a wonderful sight to see the net come up. It is filled with one quivering mass of silver, and into this mass the fishermen dip baskets and toss the fish into the boats by scores and hundreds. When a boat is filled, it heads at once for the shore, and a waiting boat takes its place ; and so it goes on till the great seine-net is empty.

On shore the scene is every whit as busy as on sea. Every living soul in the fishing village swarms down to the beach to lend a hand. The boats are rapidly emptied, and sail or pull back to the shoal ; the workers ashore carry the fish to the cellars, where the women take them in hand. Anything and everything that will carry fish is pressed into service. The pilchards are piled on donkey-carts, wheelbarrows, and hand-carts ; two boys have a clothes-basket between them, and small children carry a dozen or two in little baskets. Into the cellars go the fish as swiftly as possible.

A fish-cellar for pilchards is usually cut out of the rock, and the floor is covered with a layer of salt. Upon this salt the women engaged in the task of curing the fish spread a complete layer of pilchards. Salt is spread again till the fish are covered, and then comes another layer of pilchards ; and in this way, by alternate layers of salt and fish, the cellar is filled. On top of all are placed weighted boards to press out the water and oil from the mass below, and the cellar is left for some weeks for the fish to cure. Then it is opened, and the salted fish are packed in barrels and sent away to market.

## In Shakespeare's Country

### IN SHAKESPEARE'S COUNTRY.

ENGLAND'S greatest poet was born in the heart of the land, in "leafy Warwickshire." His early home, Stratford-on-Avon, lies beside a pleasant stream, flowing gently through a pleasant country. Warwickshire has no scenes of wild and striking grandeur to offer to the traveller; it can boast of no craggy rocks or rushing torrents, but it is full of quiet loveliness. It is a county of rich meadow-land, watered by slow-flowing streams and brooks, broken and diversified by most picturesque woodland scenery, and its highways and byways wend by splendid parks, and past castles and mansions rich in tradition, quaint and beautiful in architecture.

Stratford-on-Avon stands to-day, as it stood of old, in "a sweet and pleasant place of good pasturage and watering." Beside it flows the clear Avon, and around it spread lovely meadows and fertile corn-lands, while many a leafy byway or field-path leads to the quaint old-world villages which lie in the neighbourhood, and with which Shakespeare was familiar.

In the town itself, the chief centre of interest is the house in which he was born. It stands in Henley Street—a quaint, half-timbered, two-storied building, with dormer windows and a wooden porch. The house has been much altered since Shakespeare's day, for it was used for more than 200 years as a dwelling-house, and finally came down to being a butcher's shop. At last, towards the middle of the nineteenth century, the house was purchased by the nation, and restored as

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nearly as possible to the appearance it must have presented when Shakespeare's home.

After the birthplace comes the burial-place, and this is in the chancel of Holy Trinity Church, whose tall spire rises so beautifully beside the placid Avon. The church stands on a terrace beside the river, almost embosomed in trees, and approached by a pleasant avenue of limes. Everyone visits it to see the monument and grave of Shakespeare. A bust of the great poet is placed on the north wall of the chancel, and his grave lies below, and within the altar-rails. Here we may read the well-known lines :

“GOOD FRENDE FOR JESUS SAKE FORBEARE  
TO DIGG THE DUST ENCLOSED HEARE  
BLESTE BE <sup>E</sup>Y MAN <sup>T</sup>Y SPARES THES STONES;  
AND CURST BE HE <sup>E</sup>Y MOVES <sup>S</sup>MY BONES.”

Why did Shakespeare write these lines? Because in those days graves were very often disturbed, and he wished his remains to lie at peace in the grave which, very likely, he had chosen for himself.

A most interesting place is the Guild Hall, a fine old half-timbered building erected in 1296, and used for hundreds of years as a Town Hall. With this building Shakespeare was very familiar, and it is probable that here he became acquainted with plays and players, for performances were given in it during Shakespeare's boyhood by travelling companies.

Above the Guild Hall is the famous Grammar School, where Shakespeare learned the “small Latin and less

## In Shakespeare's Country

Greek" of which Ben Jonson spoke. The desk which he is said to have used now stands in the Museum formed at the birthplace.

When Shakespeare returned from London to spend his last years in his native town; he bought a fine house called New Place, and in the garden he planted a mulberry-tree. Nearly 150 years after the death of Shakespeare the property came into the hands of a clergyman named Gastrell, a man of violent and selfish temper. First he became angry because visitors to the town often asked permission to view the famous mulberry-tree which the great poet had planted, and he cut the tree down. But much worse was to follow.

After a time a quarrel arose between Gastrell and the authorities of Stratford over the payment of rates for New Place. In his anger, the furious clergyman actually pulled down to the ground Shakespeare's own home and sold the materials. Now nothing remains but the site and a few traces of the foundations.

When the visitor has seen the memorials of Shakespeare, he will take a pleasant walk of about a mile from Stratford to Shottery, to see Anne Hathaway's cottage there. It is a picturesque, half-timbered, thatched cottage, in which it is supposed that Shakespeare's wife spent her maiden days, but the theory is by no means certain. It is known that in Shakespeare's time the cottage was tenanted by one Richard Hathaway, who had a daughter Anne or Agnes, and there is some evidence to connect this Anne with the Anne Hathaway whom the poet married, but of distinct proof there is none. Still, tradition is in favour of

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the belief, and the cottage has now been acquired by the trustees of Shakespeare's birthplace.

Many days may easily and pleasantly be spent in excursions around Stratford, visiting one after another of the pretty villages which the poet knew, and the places with which his name is connected. The best time of all is in spring or early summer, when

"Daisies pied, and violets blue,  
And lady-smocks all silver-white.  
And cuckoo-buds of yellow hue,  
Do paint the meadows with delight."

Then the way is shaded by the tender foliage of the noble elms, which flourish so mightily in this deep, strong soil that the elm is sometimes called the "Warwickshire weed."

About four miles from Stratford stands a fine old Elizabethan manor-house, Charlecote, in whose deer-park tradition says that Shakespeare went poaching. Many old accounts of the poet's life state that he left Stratford and went to London in fear of Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote, whose deer he had stolen from the park. It is not at all certain that this happened, but that Shakespeare did not like Sir Thomas Lucy is very plain from his works. In "The Merry Wives of Windsor" there is a "Mr. Justice Shallow," of whom the poet makes great fun, and draws in a very ridiculous light. It is clear from many little touches that Shakespeare had Sir Thomas Lucy in his mind when he drew this portrait of a pompous country squire.

The mansion of Charlecote is of great interest in

## In Shakespeare's Country

itself as a perfect specimen of an Elizabethan manor-house. Save for a couple of rooms added to the structure, it stands exactly as Sir Thomas Lucy built it in 1558. It was built originally with a front and two projecting wings, and it was visited by Queen Elizabeth in 1572. In honour of this visit Sir Thomas added a porch and adorned it with the Queen's arms and monogram. By this addition the plan of the house was made to exactly resemble a capital E, and thus commemorate the royal visit.

Charlecote is approached from the road through an ancient gatehouse, a most beautiful and picturesque building which opens upon a courtyard or walled flower-garden, and the whole place is in most perfect order and preservation. It is an Elizabethan home lasting unchanged until the twentieth century.

### AN OLD ENGLISH HOUSE.

ENGLAND is full of castles, abbeys, and manor-houses, which are still occupied by the descendants of those who built them or by those into whose hands they have passed in later days, and among these stately piles it is hard to pick one as a type of a fine old English house. But, putting aside the great castles, like Warwick, whose frowning walls and grim battlements tell of an age when defence was the first thought in the mind of a builder, let us take a mansion erected at a more peaceful time. Such a mansion is to be found in Compton Wynyates, a fine old Warwickshire house, built in 1509.

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Compton Wynyates stands in a very secluded spot, some twelve miles from Stratford, hidden away in a thickly-wooded dell. You approach the house along a mere byway, and do not see it until you are close upon it. Then a picturesque medley of gables, turrets, battlements and chimneys, springs to view, and you stand to wonder at so splendid a house being built in so hidden and solitary a place.

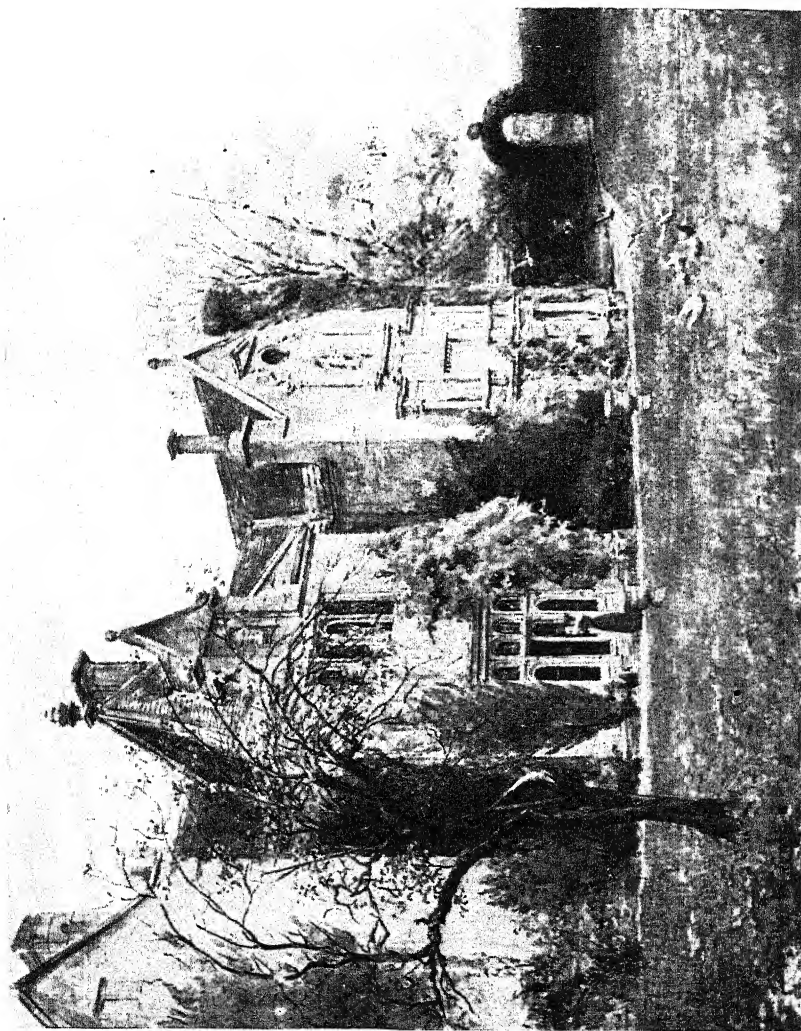
Compton Wynyates was built at a time when the bare lofty walls of a castle-keep were being deserted for the brighter, more cheerful rooms of a mansion whose walls were pierced by many windows. But at the same time it was not wise to live entirely without protection, so a moat was dug round the house and entrance could only be gained by a drawbridge. In our quiet days a bridge of stone has replaced the wooden bridge which rose and fell, but the old oak doors which once barred the archway leading to the house are still in position, and we can see upon them the marks of musket-balls fired at the defenders of the place in troublous times.

Let us go into the great hall, the chief room of an old house—the room where once the whole family dined together at a long table, the master and his friends above the salt, the servants and humbler guests below. The hall rises the full height of the house, and has a fine timbered roof, and at one end is the minstrels' gallery, a picturesque half-timbered structure, the place where minstrels made merry music at some feast or on the visit of some great personage.

In the hall stands a huge slab of elm more than







## An Old English House

23 feet long and some 30 inches wide. It was once used for playing "shovel-board," a favourite game with our ancestors, and when in use was set up on trestles.

In this hall Sir William Compton received Henry VIII., whom Sir William had accompanied to the Field of the Cloth of Gold. Sir William, too, had won much distinction at the Battle of Spurs, and was a great favourite with bluff King Hal, to whom the knight owed much of his great fortune.

Next to the hall is the great parlour, the private room of the family when they withdrew from the hall. It is finely panelled in oak, and has a plaster ceiling, bearing the arms of the owners of the place. Beyond the parlour is the chapel, decorated with very ancient carved wooden panels. These carvings are very much older than the house, and it is believed they were brought from an old castle which Sir William Compton pulled down in order to obtain materials for his house.

But it will be impossible for us to go from room to room of this wonderful old house, for there are more than eighty of them—drawing-rooms, dining-rooms, bedrooms, great kitchens with vast old fireplaces, and gained by seventeen separate staircases, which wind and twist their way through the building. It is said there are 275 windows in the house, though an old story goes that no one knows exactly how many there are, for he who tries to count is baffled by a mysterious secret window, which he sees and counts on the first occasion, and can never find again. Its chimneys, too, rise in a veritable forest of quaintly-shaped stacks, and form as puzzling a labyrinth as the windows.

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There was a meaning in this tangle of windows and chimneys, for Compton Wynyates is full of secret hiding-places. Hundreds of years ago there was need of them. To-day no man needs to hide himself unless he has done wrong. 'Then, an innocent man might stand in great danger of a powerful enemy or of an unjust law.' So the old houses were furnished with places where men could hide from their foes until an opportunity came for escape.

Again, Compton Wynyates was a Catholic house, and in those times Roman Catholics were punished if they were found attending a Roman Catholic service, and the priest who performed the service stood in danger of imprisonment or, possibly, of death. So places were carefully constructed to which the priest could fly to hide himself when officers of the law came to the house in search of him. Many such secret chambers are found in old mansions, and are known as "priests' holes."

It was a common thing to form a secret chamber in the thickness of a wall, and the first thing required was air, the second light. Air was often given to a secret chamber by a chimney. But such a chimney remained unblackened by smoke, and would soon be detected as not doing its proper work, so it was often built in the centre of a stack of real chimneys, and thus remained hidden. So, too, amid a great number of other windows, it was not easy to detect that which gave light to a hidden room. At Compton Wynyates such is the tangle of windows and chimneys that a person may have pointed out to him the chimney and the window belong-

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ing to a secret room, and yet fail to discover the place when he searches inside.

One of the secret rooms at Compton Wynyates was discovered by a child of the house, Lady Frances Compton, in 1770. She was playing in a turret room, and fell against some plaster-work, which rang hollow. Search was made, and a concealed door was found beneath the plaster. The hidden chamber was opened, and tradition says that the skeletons of a woman and two children were found within. No one knows how they came there, but it is believed that at some time of danger they had been concealed there and forgotten.

In the roof of this great building is the famous priests' room or chapel. Here the Roman Catholics of the neighbourhood used to meet to worship in secret. A safer and better hidden place could not be devised. To this day the proof that it was a Roman Catholic chapel remains to be seen. "On an elm shelf below the south-west window are, rudely carved, five consecration crosses, showing that it had been used for the purpose of an altar, and was consecrated according to the rites of the Romish Church. The slab of wood is unique, in that it forms the only known instance of a wooden altar in England."

There was another huge room in the roof, 130 feet long, which was known as the Barracks, a place where soldiers were quartered. Here may be seen blood-stains, caused by fighting during the Great Civil War. The house was held for the King, but the Roundhead soldiery broke in, and there was desperate fighting in the Barracks, and many were slain. Cromwell's men took the house, and held it for the rest of the war.

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In one of the drawing-rooms may be seen, carved beautifully in the panelling, the arms of the Comptons and the arms of the Spencers, and this carving bears witness to a very romantic marriage. In the days of Queen Elizabeth there was a Lord Mayor of London whose name was Sir John Spencer. Sir John was a very rich man, and he had an only daughter named Elizabeth. Now, the Lord Compton of that day fell in love with Elizabeth Spencer, but the wealthy merchant did not look with any favour on Compton, and forbade him to come near the house. But the young lady herself did not share her father's feelings with regard to the young courtier, and soon a clever ruse was planned.

One day a young man, dressed as a baker, came to the house with a huge basket of loaves of bread. As he was going away again, with the great basket on his shoulders, he met Sir John himself. The wealthy merchant thought that here was a hard-working young fellow going heartily about his business. He praised him, gave him sixpence, and told him that he was on the high-road to make his fortune. So he was, but not quite as Sir John thought. The disguised baker was Lord Compton, and in the basket he was carrying off the young heiress, Elizabeth Spencer.

When Sir John learned of the trick that had been played on him he was furious, and vowed that he would never see his daughter again. But Queen Elizabeth took an interest in the affair, and finally brought about a reconciliation, and the arms of the two families were placed in the drawing-room to show that peace was restored between Sir John and the young people.

## By Fen and Broad

### BY FEN AND BROAD.

FROM hills and slopes, dales and uplands, we will take our departure and look at the flattest land of England, the wide, level stretches of country around the Wash, the Fens. A fen is a marsh, and once these immense stretches of flat land were marshes pure and simple. There is plenty of water about them now, but it is penned up by dikes and embankments, and run off by drains as big as rivers.

It is often said that those who care for Dutch landscape have no need to leave our own country to enjoy it, for the Fenland is Holland in miniature. There may be seen the same long flat stretches of country, cut by long, straight canals bordered by willow and alder ; the same kind of dikes making the same fight against the encroaching sea, the windmills pumping water into drains and out of some pool which is being reclaimed ; the green fields deep in grass, and the dark peat-cuttings whence the peasantry obtain their fuel.

It is nearly 300 years since a beginning was made of draining the Fens. Before that time the whole country was one great marsh, through which slow-moving streams crept to the sea. Very often vast tracts were completely under water. Perhaps there was heavy rain and a flood ran down the rivers ; it might be met by a high tide sweeping far up the low, flat river-beds. The flood and the tide met, and the water rose high above the shallow banks, and converted the land into a huge morass.

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It is significant that the earliest drainers of the Fens were Dutchmen, who directed Dutch labourers. These men knew what had been done in their native Holland in the way of reclaiming land, and they saw that good land could be made in the Fens if the water could only be kept in its proper place. So they began to raise embankments, to scour out the channels of rivers, to build sluices, and to pump the water out of standing pools.

The drainers had to make a great struggle with the forces of Nature ; they had almost a severer and sterner fight still with the Fen-folk. The latter had been born and bred amid their wild watery wilderness, and loved it. Their cottages were raised here and there wherever a patch of dry earth showed itself above the bog, and they traversed the Fens far and wide in their boats or on foot. When afoot, each man carried his long leaping-pole over his shoulder. With its aid he would skim like a bird over a stream or pool, and so make his way where another man would have found his path hopelessly blocked.

The Fen-men made a living by catching the fish which swarmed in the countless waterways, and by snaring the birds which haunted the wide reed-beds in vast flocks. They felt great anger at the thought of their marshes being turned to dry land, and one of their ballads gives their opinion very clearly :

“Come, Brethren of the water, and let us all assemble  
To treat upon this Matter which makes us quake and tremble ;  
For we shall Rue, if it be true that Fens be undertaken ;  
And where we feed in Fen and reed, they'll feed both Beef and  
Bacon.



## By Fen and Broad

“They’ll sow both Bean and Oats, where never man yet thought it .  
Where men did row in Boats ere Undertakers bought it ;  
But, Ceres, thou behold us now, let wild oats be their venture,  
Oh, let the Frogs and miry Bogs destroy where they do enter.”

The Fen-men fought hard against the improvements, and broke down dikes and burst open sluices, but in the end the drainers outlived these attacks, and the works were built.

Generation after generation has drained and diked and embanked until, at the present day, we may cross vast stretches of fruitful country bearing splendid crops of corn and potatoes, which were once wild marsh-land and impassable morass. And so it soon would be again if the utmost care was not taken. The sea—the hungry sea—is always ready to break in ; the rivers are always ready to break their bounds ; but the former is held at bay by dikes, and the latter are kept in bounds by strong embankments, and every defence is closely watched.

It is strange to find here and there places in the Fens called islands—as, for instance, the Isle of Ely—places far from the sea. But once they were real islands rising from the waters of the vast marsh. Perhaps the dry, firm land of which they consisted only rose a few feet above the level of the water, but it enabled the Fen-men to build their cottages, to pasture their sheep and cattle, to grow their corn, and to plant fruit-trees.

The most famous of these islands was the Isle of Ely, a patch of dry land seven miles long and four miles broad, well remembered as one of the last strongholds of the Saxons against William the Conqueror. But the vast

## England

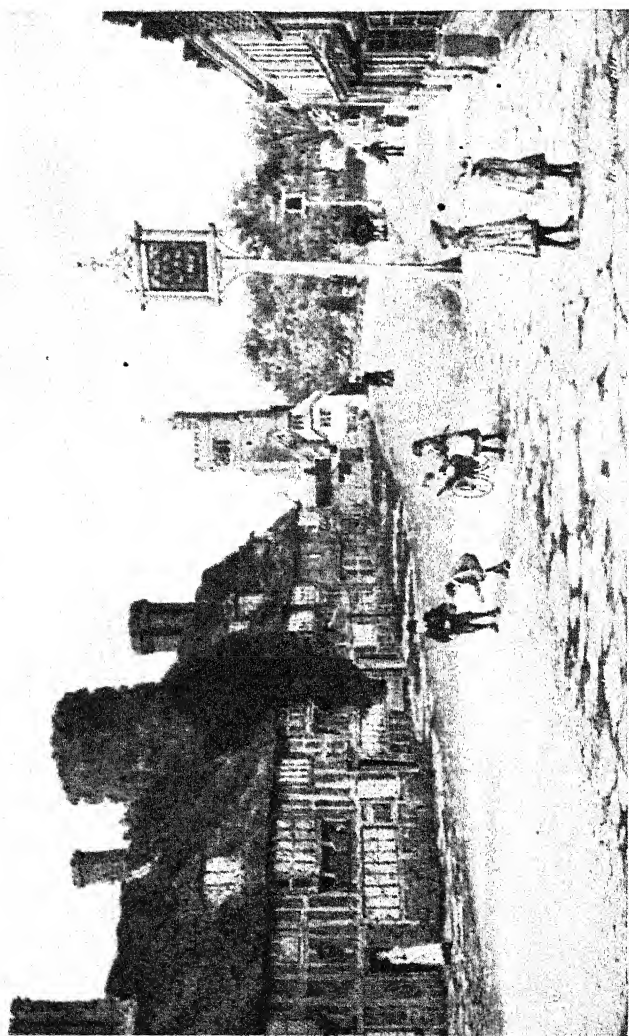
morass which once surrounded Ely has long been drained and converted into fruitful soil, forming the immense flat amidst which rises in stately and majestic fashion the noble cathedral of Ely.

Yet the sea is not altogether the loser in the battle with man along this coast. Much land has been won from it, much land has been lost to it, and is being lost to this day. The low shores of Norfolk and Suffolk, south of the Wash, are being steadily worn away in places by the attacks of the sea, and year by year the low cliffs fall before the waves of some great storm, and the sea makes a fresh inroad upon the land.

At Cromer, the well-known watering-place, the old town is under water. The present town is quite new, and out to sea lie the houses of the Cromer of past days, covered with seaweed, and with the fish swimming up and down the streets where once the Cromer folk went about their business. At low tides the ancient dwellings and ways can still be clearly traced.

Still farther out to sea lie the remains of a yet older village, called Shipden. Five hundred years ago Shipden was a port on the seaward side of Cromer, but harbour, village, and church were swallowed up by the waves. The church tower was built of flint, as is the custom of the East Country, and so well had the old masons done their work that a piece of the tower is at times seen by the fishermen about 400 yards out to sea, and they call it "the Church Rock."

The same story is told of many other places. Towns, villages, churches, have been swallowed, either little by little or at one great gulp, by the never-resting sea. So





## By Fen and Broad

serious are these inroads that plans are being formed by Government to check the rush of the sea and keep the waves in bounds.

A great feature of the county of Norfolk is the Broads—wide stretches of water connected by rivers and streams, large and small—a district beloved by yachtsmen and fishermen. All who love to sail a boat find the Broads a summer paradise. They can go by innumerable waterways from lake to lake, from pool to pool, from mere to mere, through a wide district.

A summer journey by boat through this land of streams and pools is a very pleasant excursion. The traveller must fit out his yacht with plenty of food, for the region is lonely, and houses and inns few and far between. Very particular people carry fresh water as well, for the drinking water drawn from the marshy soil is a very doubtful liquid; the watermen who live on the Broads just dip up what they want from the river, and there are those who say that the plan is as good as any.

Even better than a yacht for a trip through the Broads is the local barge, a Norfolk wherry. The Norfolk wherry is a true descendant of the Viking longship, once so well known along this coast. It is a long, low boat, broad and roomy, drawing very little water, and sailing very fast. It has one huge brown sail, which is hoisted forward, right in the bow; and to see a big wherry cracking at full speed across a great broad with a favouring wind is to see a very fine sight indeed. Stranger still is it to look across an open stretch of grassy country and see brown sails dotting, as it seems,

## England

the surface of the fields. They belong to wherries slipping along some hidden waterway.

The sides of the Broads and rivers are often marshy, and dotted with rushy and reedy islets in the most picturesque fashion. Among these islets lie innumerable little pools called "pulks." From the islets pheasants may be often flushed in summer and autumn, and coot in winter; from the "pulks" may be taken large baskets of fish.

The quantity of fish, especially in the remoter or preserved portion of the Broads, is almost incredible, and anglers often reckon their catch by the stone weight instead of the number of fish. A single "pulk" will often afford a good basket, and a well-known fishing writer says: "Once while yachting on the Norfolk Broads, we were lying at anchor close to the shore. About a yard from our bows was a clear pool amid the weeds, about 6 feet in diameter and 3 feet deep. This was literally as full as it could be of roach and rudd swimming to and fro; the brilliant sunshine lit up the red and silver and gold of the fishes as they hovered over the bright green weed, and the whole made as pretty a sight as I have ever seen of the kind."

When winter comes, yachts and wherries are laid up, and summer visitants fly away with the swallows; yet the Broads are not deserted. The sharp weather fills them with myriads of wild-fowl—ducks and geese, snipe and widgeon—and the wild-fowl hunter is out in his slate-coloured punt. The boat is painted of this colour in order to blend with its surroundings and escape notice, and in its bow is fixed a huge gun, often throwing half

## By Dale and Fell

a pound of large shot at a single discharge. When this gun is fired into a flock of wild-duck, it will often fetch down ten or a dozen at once, and the skilful punt-shooter soon makes a big bag.

Then, perhaps, comes sharper weather still, and the punts can no longer move over the ice-bound waters. This is the time of the skater's festival, and a nobler skating-ground can nowhere be found. Over river and pool and broad he flies, with unnumbered miles of clear, open ice before him.

### BY DALE AND FELL.

THE huge county of Yorkshire has many claims on our attention. It has vast manufacturing centres, and in some parts it is crowded thickly with towns and villages, packed with mills, and studded with lofty chimneys which belch out unceasing clouds of smoke. Then, again, it has a splendid coast-line, with noble cliffs and rocky headlands, dotted with quaint fishing villages and tiny ports, whence the "cobles" put out to sea with hardy fishermen aboard. And, striking right away inland, it can show some of the most beautiful scenery in its dales and fells that our country has to show.

Putting busy town and breezy fishing village aside for the moment, we will go up to the lofty moorland heights of this "county of the broad acres" and see some of their beauties, and hear some of the tales which linger around their quiet, grey stone villages.

On the western side of Yorkshire the land heaves up to the Pennine Chain—the "backbone of England,"

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as it is often called. It is not a chain of sharply-defined peaks; it is rather a great mass of rolling moorland whose tablelands, the "fells," are divided from each other by deep valleys, long and narrow—the famous "dales." At the foot of each dale flows a swift river, which, twisting and turning round sharp angles of rock, leaping from ledge to ledge in sheets of foam, or gliding in deep quiet stretches below an overhanging wood, affords most striking and picturesque scenery.

There are many points at which the explorer may strike into the hills from the more level and cultivated part of the county. But perhaps the best of all is to enter the dales at Richmond, a beautiful old town beside the River Swale. It matters not from which point you approach Richmond, there is one feature of the view which catches the eye at once—the magnificent fashion in which the splendid Norman keep of its castle rises above the little town. The stately tower stands up four-square to every wind, just as its Norman builders left it 800 years ago, and around it cluster the red roofs of the town, just as they gathered there for shelter during the Middle Ages.

From Richmond the Valley of the Swale runs up into the Pennines, and the journey along it must be made by foot or carriage, for no railway has penetrated the solitudes of Swaledale, and, as far as one may look into the future in such matters, there seems every possibility of this loveliest and grandest of the Yorkshire dales retaining its isolation in this respect. About a mile from the town there is a lofty cliff called Whitcliffe



## By Dale and Fell

Scar, whence the spectator may see far up the dale whither he proposes to journey. The country people call the Scar "Willance's Leap," and it has borne this name since 1606. In that year a certain Robert Willance was out hunting, and a great mist came down the dale and wrapped the hills. So thick was the fog that Willance could scarcely see a yard before him, and suddenly he found himself on the verge of the Scar. It was too late to check or turn his horse: both went headlong over the lofty cliff, and were hurled to its foot. The horse was killed on the spot, but in some miraculous fashion the rider found himself alive at the foot of the precipice, his worst injury a broken leg. Full of wonder and thankfulness, Willance erected inscribed stones to commemorate his marvellous escape, and the stones are still to be seen at that point of the cliff from which he fell. He also presented a silver cup in memory of this event to Richmond, and the cup remains in the possession of the town.

Pushing westwards through the bold and striking scenery of the dale, we pass glen after glen, each with its little beck, its moorland stream. At times the headlands spring up so abruptly as almost to shut in the dale, and in times of storm the thunder rumbles from wall to wall of the glen with tremendous echoes. Wonderful at such times of heavy rain is it to see how swiftly the little brooks become swollen, how the main stream becomes a raging, foaming torrent. Then we understand why the bridges are so high and strong. They had seemed far too large for the little river pushing over the stones: they seem none too strong

## England

now to withstand the terrific rush of flood-water sent down from the broad faces of the fells.

As we gain the higher parts of the dale, trees and corn and rich meadow-land are left behind. The farms are sheep-farms, and the moors stretch on every hand. The houses are strongly built of grey stone, and where there are fields, grey stone walls divide them, for hedges cannot grow on these windy, storm-swept heights.

It is striking to note how the houses and barns match the grey hill-sides. Not only are the walls of grey stone, but they are roofed with slabs of stone also, and these weather to beautiful shades of green and grey, and blend perfectly with the prevailing hue.

“In the upper portions of the dales—even in the narrow riverside pastures—the fences are of stone, turned a very dark colour by exposure, and everywhere on the slopes of the hills a wide network of these enclosures can be seen traversing even the steepest ascents. The stiles that are the fashion in the stone-fence districts make quite an interesting study to strangers, for, wood being an expensive luxury, and stone being extremely cheap, everything is formed of the more enduring material. Instead of a trap-gate, one generally finds a very narrow opening in the fences, only just giving space for the thickness of the average knee, and thus preventing the passage of the smallest lamb. Some stiles are constructed with a large flat stone projecting from each side, one slightly in front and overlapping the other, so that one can only pass through by making a very careful S-shaped movement. More common are the projecting stones,

## By Dale and Fell

making a flight of steps up one side of the wall and down the other."

From the head of Swaledale a wild road crosses the fells to Wensleydale, the next great glen. The road bears the strange name of Buttertubs Pass, because it passes the edges of some vast chasms called, from their shape, the Buttertubs. There is no path leading to the depths of these immense holes, but men have been let down into them by ropes, and there found the bones of lost sheep which had fallen down the sides. It is a most unsafe road for a stranger to traverse, above all, if night is falling. The way runs along the lip of these frightful descents, and is very lonely. If a passer-by fell into one of these huge hollows, he would never be heard of again.

The road is freely used by the dalesfolk, save when winter snowdrifts block the passage, when it becomes too dangerous even for them. Snow is a terrible enemy on these bleak heights if it makes its appearance in earnest. The great snowstorm of January, 1895, will long be remembered, for it "blocked the roads between Wensleydale and Swaledale until nearly the middle of March. Roads were cut out, with walls of snow on either side from 10 to 15 feet in height, but the wind and fresh falls blocked the passages soon after they had been cut. The difficulties of the dalesfolk in the farms and cottages were extraordinary, for they were faced with starvation owing to the difficulty of getting in provisions. They cut ways through the drifts as high as themselves in the direction of the likeliest places to obtain food, while in Swaledale they built sledges."

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Buttertubs Pass leads us to Hawes, a quiet little town lying among splendid hill scenery ; and not far from Hawes is Semmerwater, the only piece of water in Yorkshire that really deserves to be called a lake. There is an old Yorkshire legend which gives Semmerwater a miraculous origin.

“Where the water now covers the land,” says the story, “there used to stand a small town, and to it there once came an angel disguised as a poor and ill-clad beggar. The old man slowly made his way along the street from one house to another asking for food, but at each door he was sent empty away. He went on, therefore, until he came to a poor little cottage outside the town. Although the couple who lived there were almost as old and as poor as himself, the beggar asked for something to eat, as he had done at the other houses. The old folks at once asked him in, and, giving him bread, milk, and cheese, urged him to pass the night under their roof. Then, in the morning, when the old man was about to take his departure, came the awful doom upon the inhospitable town, for the beggar held up his hands, and said :

“ ‘ Semmerwater, rise ! Semmerwater, sink !  
And swallow the town, all save this house,  
Where they gave me meat and drink.’ ”

Of course, the waters obeyed the disguised angel ; and, for proof, have we not the existence of the lake, and is there not also pointed out an ancient little cottage standing alone at the lower end of the lake ?”





AN ENGLISH COTTAGE

# The Playground of England

## THE PLAYGROUND OF ENGLAND.—I.

IN the far north-west of our land stands a group of bold rocky mountains known as the Cumbrian Group. Here rise well-known peaks, the highest land in England—Scafell, Helvellyn, Skiddaw—and among ~~the~~ peaks lie many most beautiful lakes.

This lovely stretch of country is called the Lake District, and every year great numbers of people go to climb the rugged, broken heights, or to wander beside the shores of these pleasant stretches of water in this playground of England.

The great charm of the countryside lies in the wonderful variety of its scenery, and all the scenes so beautiful. The traveller passing through the land by coach or motor traverses, perhaps, a frowning pass, where huge bare rocks rise in gloomy grandeur, and the scene is one of savage desolation. He gets a glimpse of a still wilder nook as he passes the mouth of some "ghyll" (a cleft in the rocks), from whose dark recesses a "force" (a wild, rushing torrent) is madly pouring. Then he whirls round a corner, rolls down a slope, and the scene is changed as if by magic. He enters a quiet vale shut in by the hills, its level floor covered with sweet verdant meadows where the cattle feed, its face dotted with the quaint grey stone houses of shepherds and cottagers, and the "force," now a quiet, shining brook, winding its silver links over the face of the tiny valley.

On rolls the coach, and now a vaster prospect opens out—a prospect almost filled by a wide sheet of clear

## England

bright water, one of the great lakes of the country, and the road runs along the shore, skirting bays, crossing tributary streams, passing under shade of the pleasant woods that fringe the shore, and bringing to view at every turn some fresh beauty in the ever-changing scene.

The largest of all the lakes is Windermere, a splendid sheet of water about eleven miles long and one mile wide. It may be seen admirably from the deck of a lake steamer which runs from end to end. On a summer day the great lake is a picture of beauty : its bosom is dotted with white-sailed yachts, while pleasure-boats glide from island to island or from shore to shore. Like a great river the lake winds between its banks till northwards it is shut in by lofty hills, which spring from the water's edge. The lakeside is dotted with pretty houses, peeping from amidst groves of trees, with grey old farms lying among meadows and corn-fields.

At a point where the road from the town of Kendal runs down to the waterside there is a ferry across the lake. From time immemorial the dalesmen and market-folk have crossed Windermere at this point, and it is known as The Ferry.

"There are legends to tell of this Ferry. The most sinister is of an awful voice which on wild nights began to peal across the turmoil, 'Boat!' Once a bold ferryman answered the call, put off his boat, and rowed into the storm and darkness. Half an hour later he returned with boat swamping and without a passenger. The boatman's face was ashen with terror ; he was



## The Playground of England

dumb. Next day he died. No boatman, after this incident, could be prevailed to put off in darkness, so a priest was summoned from the Holy Holme. With bell and book he raised the skulking demon. At mid-day there was the voice of storm in the air, though, mindful of the call of the Master on Galilee, the waters fell calm. Voices argued with the priest, whose cross, firmly planted by the edge of the lake, was surrounded by terror-struck lake-men. At the end of a long altercation the demon released from thrall the soul of the boatman, and craved for mercy. For its peace, the priest laid the evil thing in the depths, there to remain until 'dry-shod men walk on Winander [the lake] and trot their ponies through the solid crags.' "

As we advance into the northern basin of the great lake, the scene grows in grandeur. "Over a vast plain of water the distant mountains seem to hang. There are misty indications of level meadows and woodlands next the water, but the charm lies in the craggy, shaggy braes and the uprising summits."

The voyage is ended at Ambleside, on the northern shore, where we take coach along the Rydal road to see some of the best-known parts of Lakeland, famous not only for their beauty, but also because the great poet Wordsworth lived there, and wrote of the lovely scenes which surrounded his home. Our way will take us by Rydal Water into lovely Grasmere, a sweet valley dotted with tiny lakes and ringed about by wild and lofty heights.

We pass Rydal Mount, where Wordsworth lived in old age, speed by Rydal Water, and on into Grasmere,

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where Wordsworth's grave lies beside the church, and the Rothay, his favourite stream, murmurs near by.

Beyond Grasmere we toil up the steep Pass of Dunmail, a wild, desolate, rock-strewn piece of country. At the head of the pass stands a pile of stones—the Cairn of Dunmail—telling of

“Old unhappy far-off things  
And battles long ago.”

In far-off days Dunmail was the last King of Cumbria, whose people then were Picts. Edgar the Saxon came against him to seize the crown, and of this crown of Cumbria a strange legend is told.

The crown of Dunmail was charmed, and whoever could seize it was certain to gain the kingdom. So Edgar the Saxon was eager to get it into his hands. Now, there was a wizard in those days who lived in a cave among the hills, and he held a master-charm which would make the magic power of the crown useless. Dunmail sought the cave of the wizard to slay him, and thus make himself safe in the possession of the magic crown.

But to reach the magician was no easy thing. His cave was guarded by a ring of wild wolves, who watched their master. Further, the wizard had the power to make himself invisible, save for one moment, and that at the break of day. But one morning, at peep of dawn, Dunmail burst through the ring of wolves and dashed into the cave, sword in hand. The magician leapt to his feet to utter a curse on the King, and he had called out the words, “Where river runs north or

## The Playground of England

south with the storm," when the sword fell, and he was slain at a single stroke.

When Edgar the Saxon heard of this, he sent spies to find out the place of which the magician had spoken, and they found out that the words were true of Dunmail Raise. And they are true to this day. In times of storm the torrent on Dunmail will set north or south with the wind in most uncertain fashion.

"In the pass the two armies met, and there was a fierce battle. At first the Picts under Dunmail held the upper hand, and the Saxons were beaten back again and again. But some of the chiefs who followed Dunmail were traitors, and they turned on their King and slew him, and gave the day to the Saxons.

As Dunmail fell, he tore off his magic crown and gave it to a faithful follower. "Bear my crown away!" he cried; "let not the Saxon ever wear it." He was obeyed. A few loyal chiefs burst their way through the foe, the crown among them, and escaped in a great cloud of mist. They fled across the hills, and came to a deep tarn. Here they flung the crown into its depths, leaving it there "till Dunmail come again to lead us."

And legend says that every year the faithful warriors come back, draw up the magic circlet from the depths of the tarn, and carry it to the pile where their King lies in his age-long sleep. They knock with his spear on the topmost stone of the cairn, and from its heart comes a voice—"Not yet, not yet; wait awhile, my warriors."

# England

## THE PLAYGROUND OF ENGLAND—II.

OVER the top of Dunmail Raise we go, and soon Thirlmere comes into sight—a long, lonely lake with never a farmhouse or cottage to break the silence of its shores. Why so lonely? Because Thirlmere is at once a lake and a reservoir. Its clear waters form the drinking-supply of busy, mill-packed Manchester, and through ninety miles of mountain and moorland and meadow runs a huge iron pipe, which conveys these clear waters to the houses of the far-off town.

To secure the lake from pollution, the whole of the ground around it has been purchased and cleared of its scanty population, and now clear brooks pour their water, undefiled by any use, into the great basin.

Seen from the main road—for nearer approach is forbidden—Thirlmere is a scene of great beauty. The placid lake lies sleeping in its hollow, and beyond, up springs the noble mass of the mighty Helvellyn, furrowed with watercourses, jagged with scaurs and grey outcrops of rock, with wide stretches of bracken and sweeps of green grass. Then, again, in full sight, are Saddleback and, away to the north, Skiddaw; the latter has a fleecy cloud streaming from its summit, much, we fancy, as the smoke must have streamed away on that famous Armada night when

“Skiddaw saw the fire that burned on Gaunt’s embattled pile,  
And the red glare of Skiddaw roused the burghers of Carlisle.”

Some distance farther we pause to climb up to the

## The Playground of England

Justice Stone, a huge flat-topped boulder, a famous landmark, and a stone around which many stories have gathered. It is said that in plague times this was a spot to which came people from the plague-ridden town of Keswick, a few miles ahead. They brought money in their hands and laid it on the Justice Stone, and retired ; then the pedlars and dealers, bringing goods from the outside world, came up to the stone, laid down the goods, and took up the money. In this way business was done, and yet the outsiders did not come into contact with the plague-stricken citizens. The Justice Stone was also the gathering-place for the shepherds of the neighbouring valleys. Here they met to exchange strayed sheep, and deal fairly with each other, and thus the name sprung up. The stone was used for this purpose until almost within living memory.

On we go to Keswick, and here we are in the country of Derwentwater, a splendid sheet which many hail as Queen of the Lakes. It is a most picturesque lake, dotted with beautiful islands and encircled by mountain heights. Its islands are real islands—not mere snags of rock thrusting themselves above the water, but sweeps of level, well-wooded land. On one of them, Lord's Isle, once dwelt the Earls of Derwentwater. The last Earl was one of the Jacobite leaders of "the Fifteen" when in 1715 the Old Pretender tried to regain the Stuart crown. The rebellion failed, and the Earl was beheaded on Tower Hill. His lands were seized, his mansion fell into ruins, and his family became extinct.

Not far from Lord's Isle are the famous Falls of Lodore,

## England

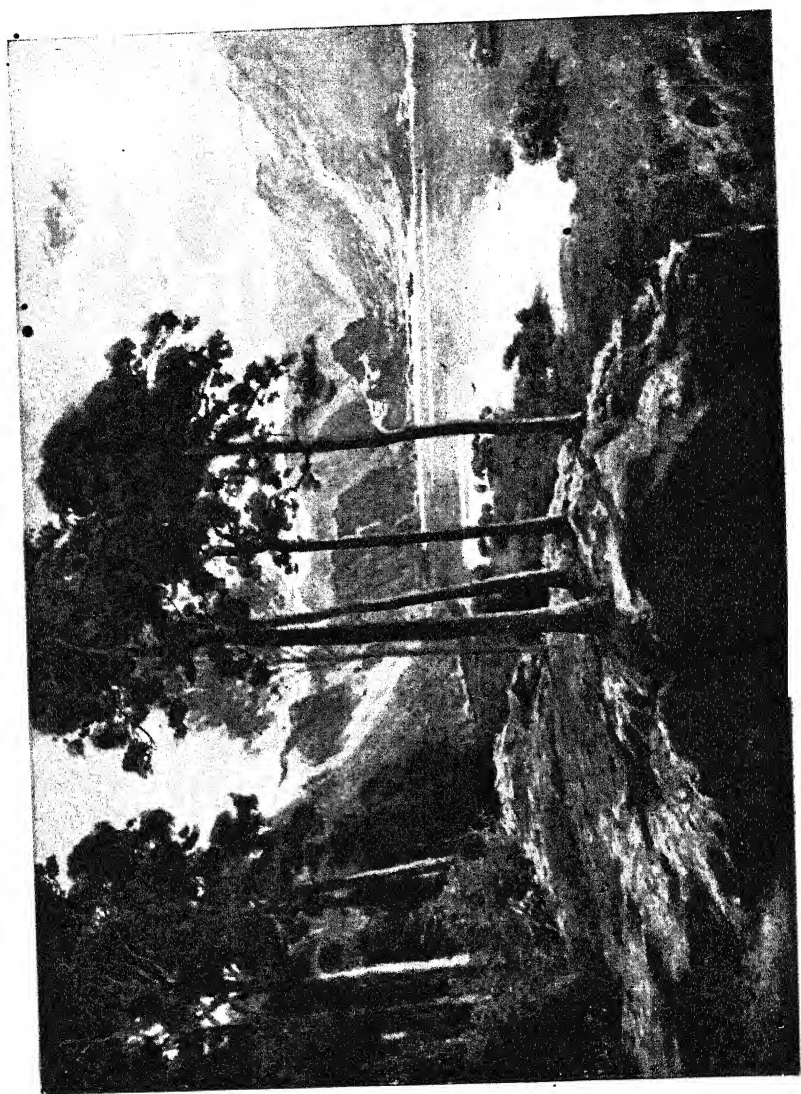
sung by the poet Southey. His description does not hold in dry weather, but after a great fall of rain, his words prove to have no exaggeration about them. Down from the moorland the stream comes rushing and leaping from ledge to ledge of rock with clouds of spray, a tumultuous thundering of leaping water, and all the force and fury painted in the well-known poem.

The head of Derwentwater is so overgrown by weed that a path has been cut to allow boats to row up to Lodore, and not far away is the Floating Island, anchored to the bottom by long cables of weed-growth. It is formed by a great mat of vegetable fibre, which usually lies on the lake-bed ; but at times this fibre becomes filled with natural gas, and then it rises in a mass and floats on the surface as an island.

Near this point the River Derwent enters the lake from the narrow glen of Borrowdale, famous for its "Bowder Stone," a vast boulder which has fallen from the crags above. The remarkable thing about this huge stone—some 2,000 tons in weight—is that it has fallen, as it were, on its point and remained there. It has settled in some wonderful fashion on so narrow a base that people on opposite sides of it may shake hands through a hole under it.

Borrowdale enjoys another distinction, too—that of being the wettest place in England. At Seathwaite, near the head of the glen, 180 inches of rain have been known to fall in a single year, four or five times the average rainfall for the country in general.

Not far from Derwentwater is the pretty lake of Bassenthwaite. Between them is a low-lying strip of







## The Playground of England

grassy land. And it happens at times when Borrowdale pours down its teeming floods that this strip sinks below the rising water, and the lakes mingle and form one great stretch from end to end.

But there is one other lake we must glance at before we leave this land of beauty, and this is Coniston Water.

Coniston Water is a noble lake embosomed in a mass of mountains, of which the finest is Coniston Old Man, a famous peak. It is noted as the home of char, that mysterious and beautiful fish of the Lake Country. Very little is known of this fish, for, as a rule, during the fishing season they keep at the bottom of deep water, and very rarely are they captured with the fly. Sometimes they are taken by the net, or by a long line weighted with lead. Potted char is a famous delicacy in Lakeland, and commands high prices, and in old recipes mention is found of char-pie.

On the shores of Coniston Water stands Brantwood, where John Ruskin lived, and Tennyson and other famous men have had houses beside this beautiful lake.

The craggy hills around Coniston are, in their most solitary recesses, the haunt of wild goats. The goats were introduced a long time ago to keep the hill-sheep from the most dangerous places, for a goat will walk and browse calmly upon cliffs where a sheep would become giddy, fall, and be dashed to pieces. Sheep will not feed where goats have been, and thus they are kept from these dangerous places. The goats are very wild and shy, and never seen save when winter's snow

## England

drives them down from the rugged heights in search of food.

Such are a few—a very few—of the beauty-spots of this lovely region. We have not spoken of other lakes, such as Ullswater, home of beauty, or soft Loweswater, or wild Wastwater, and many another mere or tarn, all beautiful, all worthy of a place in the hearts of those who love the romantic and the picturesque.

### HEROES OF THE STORM.

ENGLAND has many workers, but none braver than the toilers of the sea. Her coasts are dotted with hamlets, each with its little quay or open beach, where her fishermen hoist their brown sails and set off, as evening falls, to reap the harvest of the waters.

It is a hard and perilous life. A fishing-boat puts off in the quiet evening calm, as the lights shine out from the cottages along the shore, but the men on board are never sure that they will see those lights of home again. A sudden storm springs up; the heavy waves overwhelm the tiny craft, and perhaps its brave crew are swallowed up in the sea. A broken thwart or spar washed ashore may give a hint of their fate, but they are never seen again among living men.

But the facing of these perils breeds the finest and hardiest race of boatmen in the world. This is seen to the full when a call is made for the services of the life-boat. Let us fancy that we are walking through the single street of a fishing village on a winter day, when a tremendous storm is lashing the coast. The street is

## Heroes of the Storm

empty save for ourselves, and every door is fast shut against the bitter wind. The boats are all home from sea, and are dragged high up on the shingle; out of reach of the great breakers which thunder on the shore and send their surf swirling in masses of snowy-foam along the beach. We make our way inch by inch in the teeth of the terrific wind, and are thankful for the smallest shelter in which to pause and draw a breath.

Suddenly a man comes racing up from the little quay. He pauses at the door of a building which stands alone; he seizes a rope and begins to pull, and the loud clanging of a bell mingles with the shrieks of the storm.

Ah! what a change! The silent, deserted village becomes a scene of the busiest life and animation. Doors burst open on every hand, and out rush men, and race head down against the wind for the building where the bell is ringing. After them stream women and children; all run as if running for a wager. What prize do those stalwart fellows race to gain? The prize of risking their lives to help their fellow-creatures. There is a wreck off shore, and the bell is calling volunteers to man the lifeboat. The first men to gain the house form the crew, and these at once begin to jump into oilskins and fasten huge cork belts round their bodies, while the great boat is run out and hurried down to the beach.

Everyone lends a hand, and in a marvellously short time the lifeboat is gliding down the slips into the sea, her crew aboard. The boat takes the water like a duck, her sail is hoisted, and she beats off shore in a sea

## England

in which no other vessel could live. Again and again a wave breaks over her and fills her full of blue water, but up she springs, and empties herself like a sea-bird shaking the spray from her back. When a sea breaks aboard, the crew grip the nearest thwart and hang on ; they are soaked from head to heel in an instant, despite their oilskins. But they care nothing for that ; their eyes are fixed ahead, eagerly looking out for the wreck. What or where it is they do not know yet. All they know is that the lightship which guards a dangerous sandbank some miles off-shore is making signals, and they know that a vessel is in distress.

The lifeboat thrashes through the furious seas, and soon they see the lightship—a stout vessel securely anchored in position near the sandbank. It is her duty at night to keep a great lamp burning to warn seamen not to approach her perilous neighbourhood. Soon the lifeboat is sweeping past the anchored lightship, and her men hail the lightship with a tremendous shout of “Where away?”

“South end o’ the bank!” roar the lightshipmen in reply ; and the lifeboat darts on like a living creature, for the gale favours her on that tack.

The short winter day is now closing in, and the keen eyes on board the lifeboat are straining eagerly into the dusk, when a sudden shout goes up from every throat : “There she is! there she is!”

A tremendous blaze of light has broken out a mile ahead of them. The doomed vessel is burning a “flare,” perhaps of cloth soaked in oil, anything to make a bright light and show her position. Suddenly

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the flare goes out. It sinks as swiftly as it had risen, and a groan of anxiety bursts from the lips of the lifeboat heroes. Has she gone down, carrying to the bottom the poor fellows who had raised the flare a short time back? They do not know, and on they rush to see.

Soon they gain the tail of the dreaded sandbank, which has seen the destruction of many and many a good ship, and here they find the wreck. The back of the ship is broken, her main and mizen masts are gone, and only the foremast stands; and in the foretop a dozen poor fellows are lashed in the rigging, with icy seas sweeping over them at every moment.

The coxswain of the lifeboat burns a hand signal, and it throws a bright light across the roaring sea, and in a pause of the howling wind the crew hear faint cheers from the shipwrecked seamen, and shout a cheery reply: "Hold on, boys! we've come for you, and we won't go back without you."

But how to get them? that is the question. The lifeboat has ridden through terrible seas on her journey, but they are nothing, nothing to the seas which are breaking round the lost vessel; for the latter has been driven out of deep water on to the bank, and on the bank is no steady run of water, but a thousand furious cross-currents, whirling this way and that way in terrific fury; and when current meets current up goes a great column of foam as high as a ship's mainmast, and setting up a roar heard above the wild hurly-burly of storm and sea.

On board the lifeboat a quick, short council is held.

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"Wait till morning," says one ; " we'll lie off all night."

"Can't be done," says the coxswain ; " she'll break up altogether long before daybreak, and then it's good-bye to those poor fellows in the foretop. No, we'll veer down to her, for we lie to windward."

So over goes the anchor of the lifeboat, and the strong cable of five-inch Manilla is made fast to it. Now, the coxswain is going to do this : The lifeboat will swing at anchor, and the wind will drive it towards the wreck. Little by little he will pay out the hawser, so that, yard by yard, the lifeboat will swing nearer and nearer to the perishing sailors, for perishing they are in the bitter cold of this awful night.

Down, down the lifeboatmen veer to the wreck, held safely by the mighty hawser, and light after light is burned. But they do not dare to approach the side of the wreck closely, lest the cable should strain under the power of the tremendous seas and the lifeboat be dashed against the sunken part of the wreck, when all might be lost together. So they bring to some five or six fathoms from the wreck, and one of the lifeboat crew seizes a loaded cane, to which a light line is attached. A signal is burned, and by this light he makes his throw, and cleverly drops the cane into the foretop, where the benumbed men are unlashng themselves slowly and cautiously from the rigging. The light line is seized by the captain of the wrecked vessel, and by its means a stouter line is drawn aboard, and thus communication is established between ship and boat. Soon a couple of lines are rigged up, and along

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these lines the sailors crawl towards the friendly boat. Man after man comes in safety, and the lifeboat crew cheer at every rescue. But it is terribly dangerous work. The gale is rising, and the seas become more furious than ever. The lifeboat is tossed high in the air, then sinks deep in the trough of a huge wave. The only bridge to it is a couple of thin ropes hardly to be seen save when a signal light flares blue in the night, but along these ropes crawl the drenched seamen, their hearts filled with new hopes as their ears catch the deep encouraging roar of their rescuers. Last to come is the captain, who has rigged and handled the lines so that his men could pass in as great safety as possible.

"Come on, captain!—come on, in with you!" is the cry; and he comes and leaps into the boat. Hurrah! they have every man. Now how to get away? that is the question. They dare not haul up to their anchor lest the gale should carry them back on the wreck before they could get the boat under sail.

"The anchor must go, boys!" cries the coxswain. "Up with a corner of the foresail; that will throw her head off the wreck. We must run before the wind."

The manœuvre is carried out with the utmost care, for the least mistake will be paid for with the life of every man on board.

When all is ready, the coxswain's voice rings out again: "Out axe, and cut the cable!"

Down comes the keen edge, the last strand is parted, and away leaps the boat into the darkness and the furious turmoil of the raging sea. Straight across the shoals the gallant boat drives through the boiling surf,

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in which no other craft could live. Staggering, reeling, plunging she goes, but with every wild plunge she nears deep water and comparative safety, and at last, with one wild, long heave, she beats off the shoals, and the crew feel the regular run of deep water under her keel, and shout joyously: "Hurrah! cheer O!"

For of the wildest storm on the open sea these dauntless British hearts care nothing. And now they bring the nose of their gallant boat round on the homeward tack, and run for the shore, where fire and light and a warm welcome await them. And what a shout will go up when the cry rings from the sea, "All saved! all saved!" for to raise that cry is ample reward for these heroes of the storm.